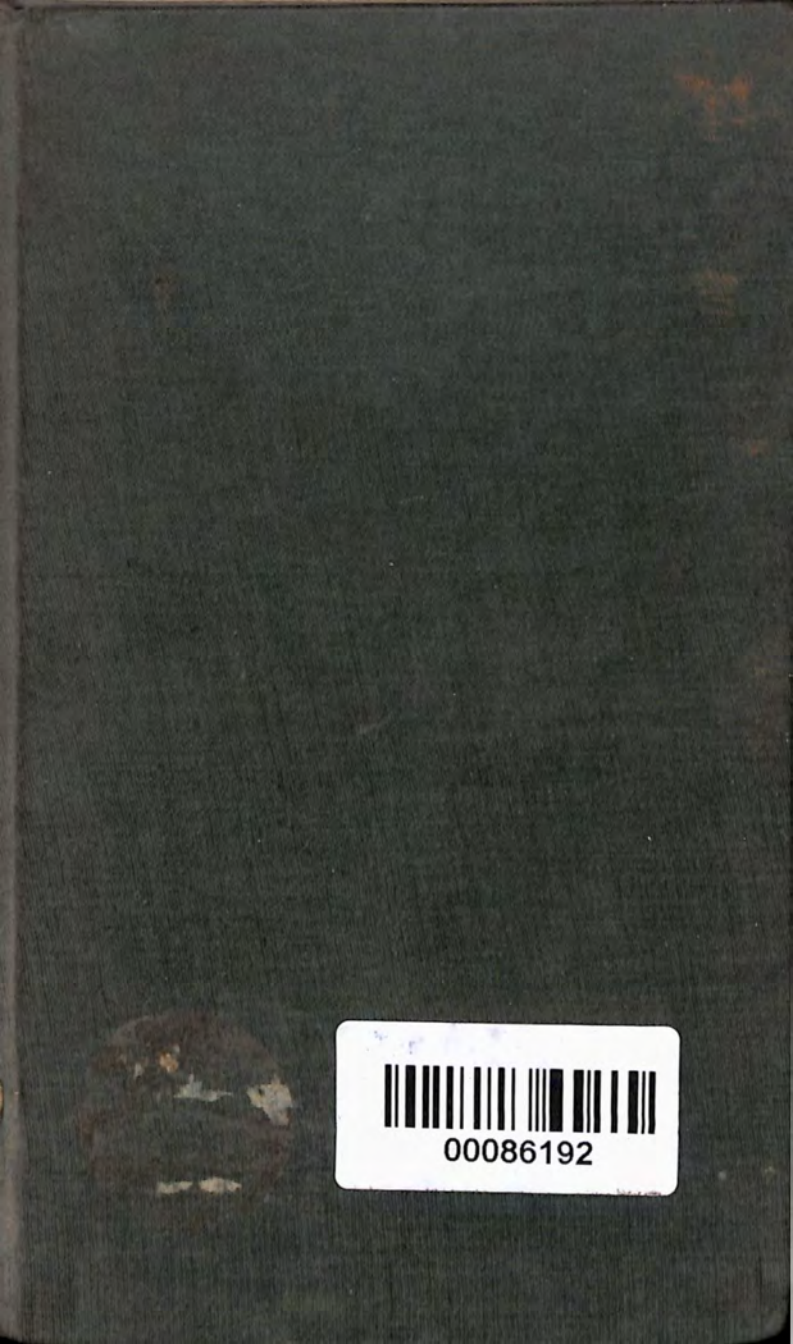
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EXCURSIONS IN NORMANDY,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

CHARACTER, MANNERS, CUSTOMS,

AND TRADITIONS OF THE PEOPLE;

OF THE

STATE OF SOCIETY IN GENERAL;

AND OF THE

HISTORY, ARTS, SCIENCES, COMMERCE, MANUFACTURES,

ANTIQUITIES, SCENERY, &c.

OF

THAT INTERESTING PROVINCE OF FRANCE.

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BY

FREDERIC SHOBERL, ESQ.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

Voyage from Havre to Caen — Traditions of the Coast — History of the Country — William the Conqueror — Scene at his Interment — Historical Particulars of Caen — The Revolution — Charlotte Corday — Spirit of the People of Caen.

Two or three years ago, a voyage from Havre to Caen was something worth talking of. Wind and weather still asserted their ancient right, and could keep passengers at sea as long as they pleased, send a storm to overtake them, and thus give to the voyage a sufficient seasoning of terror, anxiety, and poetry. Steam has robbed the wind of its power; the trip from Havre to Caen is now made in the Calvados in a few hours: and you may reckon with certainty, if you leave Havre in fine weather, to have it equally fine till you reach the mouth of the Orne. But, if the weather turns out unfavourable, the

steamer and her passengers wait till the following day. She puts out just far enough to sea to prevent you, though without ever losing sight of land, from discerning any object upon it. I must confess that I prefer travelling by land, where every tree, every stone, the hut and the palace, the church and the prison, have their history, their poetry, and their lesson.

It is but here and there that the sea has a history to relate, and these spots are mostly within a short distance of the land, and their history is connected with the latter, as in the case of engulphed towns, and of sea-fights which could be viewed from the shore, and the stories of which are handed down from father to son. In the open sea, on the other hand, you pass over spots where the fate of kings and nations has been decided, while not a cross, not a church, not a weeping-willow, intimates that here the flower and the strength of a people have been sacrificed.

The coasts along which we passed have preserved the memory of a few such events, concerning which the sea, that most silent of graves, says not a syllable, and the old fishermen relate them to their sons when storms keep them at home. Most of these stories, however, turning as they do upon the decided superiority of the French in seamanship and valour to English antagonists, sound so very apocryphal, and are so far from flattering to British national pride, that the reader would not thank me to repeat them.

But these shores witness heroic deeds of a differ-

ent kind, deeds unattended with bloodshed, which are so frequent here as not to surprise any one; while the actors merely consider that they have done a good day's work, and the world hears nothing of the matter unless a stranger happens to be present, and, struck by the novelty of such daring and disinterested efforts, is induced to make it public.

Not long before I went to Havre, I read in the Pilote de Calvados, a paper which appears at Caen, the following article :—

"I arrived yesterday (March 11th) at Hermanville during a tremendous storm. Curious to observe the sea and its waves, I went early this morning to the beach, where a douanier presently pointed out to me two vessels tossed to and fro by the wind, and predicted that they must soon founder. This intimation made me shudder. I left the douanier and went to the mouth of the Orne, where, near the village of Ouistreham, are the houses of the pilots, and where the life-boats are kept. Two of these were then lying there, the Neptune and the Amphitrite, each of which has in general a crew of twenty men. The sea ran so tremendously high, that the Neptune refused to put off. Pierre Lefoulon, called Mistain, master of the Amphitrite, went to his comrades. 'My lads,' said he, 'yonder are two vessels in distress: which of you will go with me and risk his life to save them?' No answer was returned to his question. 'Quoi!' he exclaimed, in two or three minutes, pointing to the vessels,

'quoi! pas un bon garçon! Allons! allons! qui me suit et qui nage?' 'I,' hastily answered François Varnier. 'I,' said Marie Frevet. 'I, I,' at length, cried the two brothers, Severin and Napoleon Meisson. 'And I too,' said Jean Guilloin, whose name is not entered in the list of pilots, but who was ready to venture his life like the others. There were seven of them in all. And these seven, whom all the bystanders called foolhardy, threw themselves into a boat, and steered for the brig Edward, which was in the most imminent danger. Every eye followed them as they rowed off. One moment they disappeared between the waves, and the next they again rose above them. A hundred voices from the shore were raised to encourage them, and they were accompanied by our prayers. The wind was against them, they could not luff in the narrow bay; and nothing but the adventurous spirit of Mistain, who resolved to steer his little bark over a sand-bank, which might have proved her destruction, rendered it possible to approach the brig. The waves lifted her thirty feet high, and tossed her like a nut-shell. Had sail, or rope, or helm, failed to perform its office, the boat must have gone to the bottom, and the two brigs into the bargain. At length, after incredible exertions, Mistain was seen clambering up the side of the brig, seizing the helm, and combating the tempest, till at last he steered the vessel into the river amidst the plaudits of the multitude.

"On board the brig there was a young woman,

who had tied her infant fast to her own body, and awaited death kneeling and praying at the foot of the mast. She was the wife of the captain. All the spectators had shuddered with her; all congratulated her on her deliverance; and they turned from her to hail the gallant Mistain, who calmly smiled at our applause and the expression of our admiration.

"The second brig was not saved till the following day, by Mistain also, at a moment when she made eleven feet water, and could not have lived many minutes. You should have seen the sea and its waves hurling the boat over the rocks, in order to form any idea of his courage. Shipwrecks are very frequent in these parts, and it is often the case that, while you turn your eyes another way, the vessel is gone for ever. But this was not the first enterprize of Mistain's. Whenever the wind howls and the storm rages, he is ready. And for the obscure seaman, for the noble Mistain, shall there not be a cross to perpetuate the remembrance of his intrepidity, and the glory of his self-denying devotedness?"

I beg the reader to bear in mind that in this narrative I am but the translator. In the cheerfulness with which Mistain, regardless of his own life, defies the tempest to save the lives of others; in the simple, energetic language by which he prevails on his "lads" to accompany him; in the composure which he displays after he has accomplished his work; we see the characteristics of the daring, deter-

mined pilot of Normandy : and in the way in which the reporter proposes to reward him, we discover Monsieur le Maire, or Conseillier de Prefecture, or some grocer or other of Caen, who wished for once to witness a tempest, and to earn the honour of obtaining for Mistain a recompence worthy of his merit. The French, and especially the good-natured bourgeoisie, are the veriest children in existence — a bit of red riband or the merest toy renders them supremely happy.

It was amidst such recollections that we entered the river with much less difficulty than the brig Edward.

So early as the time of the Romans, the coast of Calvados was called *Littus Saxonicum*, the Saxon shore, because Saxon pirates had conquered it and settled there in the third century. It is probable that the villages and towns of Ouistreham, Honfleur, Hermanville, &c. may owe their German names to those marauders.

For some time you ascend the river between grayish yellow rocks, which look very dreary, and are liable to give a bad opinion of the country. By degrees, however, the hills recede; thriving villages, splendid country-houses, Norman-Gothic churches, and rich meadows, furnish proofs of the flourishing state of the country. The prospect becomes more and more extensive; and at length Caen, with its numerous Gothic steeples, appears encompassed with smiling villages, orchards, meadows, and woods.

The Saxons were, in almost every instance, the

precursors of the Normans. Part of Lower Normandy, as we have seen, was named, so early as the third century, the Saxon shore; and England is to this day called, in spite of the Normans, the Land of the Angles. Caen seems to have been founded by the Saxons. In a charter of Richard II., duke of Normandy, dated 1027, the town is named Cadhim; and it is not improbable that, as several historical inquirers assert, Caen and Cadhim may be derived from the old Saxon word Cadhom, a place of war. But all such questions I leave for antiquaries to settle. Not that I set down these discussions as unimportant, but I gladly relinquish them to those who are accustomed to cut up the timbers with which a building may afterwards be constructed. It was not till a later period that the popular element — which is all that I have to do with — found now and then an historian to notice it when it occasionally raged like the sea in a tempest.

Favoured by its situation, a few leagues from the mouth of the Orne, amidst a fine country, Caen gradually grew up, through the activity of its citizens, into a considerable town; so that William the Conqueror deemed it of sufficient consequence for him to reside there a considerable time, and to make it in some measure his capital; and it thereby acquired fresh importance and increased extent.

William the Conqueror, the son of the bold Robert, and grandson by the mother's side of an humble tanner, was one of those happy natures which frequently seem to spring from mixed blood,

and which, by their courage, their valour, and their energy, furnish a proof of the good sense of that law, which prohibited marriage between relatives in times so ancient as scarcely to belong to history.

The first act of importance which ushered William the Conquéror upon the stage of history was the God's peace. At his instigation, the clergy decreed, at a council held at Caen, in 1042, that peace should prevail throughout the whole country from Wednesday evening till Monday morning; and whoever broke it was to be punished with banishment, excommunication, or the refusal of burial. William for a time rigidly enforced this law of peace, and the country flourished under him, and the people were happy. This first act of William the Conqueror's was aimed more especially at the nobles, and the grandson of the lowly tanner compelled them to respect a law of humanity.

Some years afterwards (1053) he proved that he could be equally independent, equally above the control of the clergy, when they presumed to interfere in his personal affairs or those of the country. Following the impulse of his heart, he resolved to marry Matilda of Flanders. The pope discovered an impediment in the near consanguinity of the parties and forbade the match. William defied the prohibition of the mightiest of the mighty, and regarded the anathemas launched at him from the Capitol by the head of Christendom no more than he had cared for the anger of his incensed nobles.

It was not long before he showed not less energy

in his treatment of the people, by enacting a law devised and adopted for their benefit. As in 1042 he had forced the God's peace upon the nobility, so in 1057 he put a curb upon the people, demoralised by long wars, by the absence of the sovereign, and by the insolence of the nobles, by means of the law of Couvre-feu, which required all the inhabitants of the country, on the ringing of a bell at night, to repair to their houses and to put out fire and light. If such a law was necessary, this is of itself a sufficient proof how savage the people must have become, since it was requisite to impose unnatural fetters upon all for the general protection; but it showed also the energy and resolution of him who could undertake to enact and enforce such a law, and to strike at the root of the evil.

With the same boldness then had William, when necessity demanded or only opportunity offered, set at defiance the nobility, the clergy, and the people. In all three cases he had acted consistently with the interest of the state and of his subjects; for, though his marriage may appear to be an exclusively personal concern, still the circumstance that, at a time when all bowed to the will of the pope and the clergy, he dared to oppose him, could not fail to produce the best results for the independence of the country. Where might constitutes right, courage and energy are the most irremissible conditions of sovereignty; and from what he did in the first years of his reign, from the way in which he executed his desperate enterprize against England,

William might have become the benefactor, the founder of a happy futurity for his people. He did become their scourge, the cause of a century of calamities, of endless devastations and misery; for he thought just the same as those on whom he had imposed the God's peace; he considered his power only as the means of prosecuting the trade of robbery on a large scale. The conquest of England by the Normans has ultimately, after the lapse of centuries, furthered the improvement of mankind; for even vice and injustice seem at times destined to serve as footstools to right and truth. Whoever should, on that account, excuse and defend the Conqueror, might set up as advocate for the canonisation of a murderer, because the latter has, in his execution, furnished occasion for proclaiming the power of the law, and, therefore, his very crime was a circumstance beneficial to mankind. William never did, never could, think of these consequences: plunder, the acquisition of territory and treasure —the latter he carried to such an extent that he was the wealthiest prince of his time—were his only motives and the immediate results.

The whole world, which, in its simplicity, still falls down as it did a thousand years ago before those who are the greatest adepts in the arts of devastation and destruction, offered and still offers incense to the Conqueror, while chance—for so people are accustomed to call the misunderstood indications of Providence—had already pronounced his condemnation on the very day of his interment.

William the Conqueror, whose track, after his landing in England, was marked with blood, had himself proclaimed the God's peace, and scorned the God upon whose name he called, when he made his peace a law. He had decreed that the peace-breaker should not find a grave. Fate sat in judgment upon him, and declared the law valid.

William died at Rouen on the 10th of September, 1807. His sons, his relatives, and his courtiers did not wait till he should have drawn his last breath to forsake him; and when he expired, there was not a creature about him to close his eyes. His very servants, after they had divided his wearing apparel among themselves, dispersed. The naked corpse was left by itself in the priory of St. Gervais, and it was several days before any one thought of interring it. At length the clergy resolved that the king should be buried at Caen, but nobody would undertake to defray the expence of the conveyance and burial of his remains; till at last a peasant of the environs of Rouen, named, according to the chronicles, Herluin—perhaps the same who had married William's mother, Harlotte—came forward, and out of pity removed the great king to Caen. On approaching that city, the monks of the abbey of St. Etienne, the clergy, and the citizens, went forth to escort his remains to church and to the grave. But Fate forbade even this pomp at the interment of the Conqueror; a fire broke out in the city and dispersed the procession, so that a few monks and the lowly Herluin were the only persons left to attend the royal remains.

At length they reached the church. After the solemn mass, Gislebert, bishop of Evreux, mounted the pulpit, and delivered a panegyric on the king, whose valour and magnanimity, justice and piety, and above all his liberality to the clergy, the prelate lauded in the most pompous terms. He then called upon the people to pray for the soul of the deceased monarch; and Fate chose precisely this moment to pronounce its veto. Asselin, son of Arthur, a citizen of Caen, raised his voice and cried *Harro!* over the corpse of the Conqueror. "Upon the spot where we stand, and where ye are about to bury the king, formerly stood the house of my father. William drove him illegally out of it, and he shall not be buried in the ground of which he robbed my father and myself. I demand restitution of this ground as my property. In the name of Rollo, who said that the first duty of the prince, as well as of the meanest subject, is to respect the law, and in the name of God who punishes injustice, I protest against the interment in this ground of the remains of him who has done so grievous a wrong to my father."

William himself had declared, about forty years before, that the peace-breaker should be denied a grave. Providence decreed that this law should be fulfilled. The clergy strove to silence Asselin, but the people took his part: the aged men of Caen declared that what he had said was true, and the citizens cried out that he was right, and that justice must be done him. And, by the side of the royal corpse, the bishops were obliged to purchase from

the citizen of Caen a grave for the king for sixty *sols*, and to make reparation for his injustice. Asselin was satisfied, but Fate and millions of other men whom the king had reduced to misery, were not propitiated; and when the coffin was lowering into the grave, it struck against the side and was broken in pieces, and the corpse fell out, burst, and diffused such a stench that the people hurried out of the church, the clergy omitted all the further ceremonies, and the grave was filled up.

Thus did the Conqueror at last find a grave. That grave "remained untouched till the year 1562, at which time it was forcibly opened by the Calvinists, who were persuaded that it contained great treasures. Having found in it nothing but William's skeleton, they put the bones in a piece of red taffeta, scattered them about the church, and broke the grave-stone in pieces. Most of the bones were collected by M. de Bras, and by him committed to the custody of M. de Canalu, a monk and procureur of the abbey, who deposited them with great care in his cell, with the intention of replacing them in their grave as soon as the disturbances were over. But, the city being soon afterwards taken by Coligny, the monks were expelled from the abbey, and the king's remains were again dispersed. At the time of these occurrences, the vicomte de Falaise procured from one of the insurgents a hip-bone, which he afterwards deposited in the new monument erected for the king."*

* Antiquités Angl. Norm. p. 53.

I like such indications of a higher law than that of the human will, and they may be found on every page of the book of history, if we only look for them. In this point of view, that leaf in the history of Caen which treats of the grave and funeral of the Conqueror is highly important: but the conduct of Herluin the peasant and Asselin the citizen likewise serve to illustrate the character of the people, and to render those scenes the more impressive. The one, who, when all that had lived upon the bounty of the king, that had shared the spoil with him, abandoned the royal corpse, took it under his protection, was the representative of the loyalty of the Normans to their princes, so long as they respected them: the other, Asselin and the citizens of Caen who espoused his cause, were the representatives of that proud spirit of manly independence which would not submit to injustice from the prince himself.

The history of Caen, for some time after William the Conqueror, goes hand in hand with that of Normandy in general. The wealth of England flowed into that province; and Caen, very frequently the residence of the kings of England, received its full share of the booty; so that, according to the chroniclers, under John the city was in no respect inferior to the capital of France. With the re-conquest of Normandy by the French commences the decline of the prosperity of Caen, which, for a time, was the less observable, because it was manifested only in the cessation of the in-

crease of the city; whereas, all the other large towns of France kept steadily advancing in wealth and population. This stand-still was followed at a later period by a decidedly retrograde movement.

A few incidents recorded in the history of this city are worth mentioning. The inhabitants of Caen had forty ships in the battle off Sluys, in 1340, when the fleet of Edward III. gained a signal victory over that of France. Six years afterwards, Edward landed in Normandy, and his troops were soon in the vicinity of Caen. The royal officers in Caen purposed to burn the suburbs, in order to be the better able to defend the city: but the citizens opposed this intention, and declared that, in the open field, and alone, they were a match for the king of England, and that they would march against him. The loss of the battle and of the place were the consequences of this temerity; but it was, at any rate, a proof of the courage of the inhabitants, and of their high opinion of their own prowess.

A few years later, in 1363, a sort of riot took place at Caen, and showed that, at a time when the nobles fancied themselves every thing and authorised to do what they pleased, the citizens had sufficient spirit to resent any ill treatment they might receive from them. A page took a horse to be shod, and the smith was unfortunate or awkward enough to hurt his hand a little, on which the page felled him to the ground with a stone. No sooner was the circumstance known than the people assembled,

and, in their rage, killed seventeen nobles and mortally wounded more than thirty.

Henry V. of England attempted to re-conquer Normandy. With this design he landed in 1417 in the lower province, laid siege to Caen, and took it. But even after he had penetrated into the city, the people continued to make a most desperate resistance; and it was not till the defenders, retiring from street to street, had been almost all slaughtered in the old market-place, now Place St. Sauveur, that the rest of the inhabitants surrendered. On this occasion no fewer than 3000 tradesmen and artisans emigrated. Caen continued till 1450 under the dominion of England; but it was with great reluctance that the Normans endured a foreign yoke. A Norman nobleman, putting himself at the head of a rabble (1431) in the sight of all Caen and of the English garrison, made prisoners of the English traders, 3000 in number, coming to the fair of St. Michael, near Bourg l'Abbé. In 1434, the nobles and the commons appeared with 50,000 men before Caen, the siege of which, however, the winter obliged them to raise.

At length Caen was again wrested from the hands of foreigners, and thenceforward down to the time of the Reformation the chronicles noted such days only in which the country was ravaged by plague or other calamities, or the city was visited by a king.

The Reformation, as we have seen elsewhere, found numerous partisans throughout all Nor-

mandy. The people, stedfastly adhering, after the German fashion, to old habits, were at first prepossessed against its doctrines, which, on their promulgation, found a willing ear, and ere long zealous adherents and propagators among the superior classes and in the more enlightened towns only. In Caen the scholars and individual ecclesiastics were their first confessors and disseminators. A different lever was required to cause the lower classes to exchange the old for the new, and the pressure of severe distress came, as in Germany, to second the teachers of reform. The people, especially in the country, were in a state of such abject indigence, that scarcely any but the clergy were able to pay taxes, and these had risen in 1558 to such a height that the parish priests and curates were forced to evade the payment of them by flight: hence mass had not been performed for many years in several villages, especially in the vicinity of Caen. It was during this interval that the preachers of reform came forward publicly at Caen. The people attached to the new doctrine hopes such as it never meant to encourage and never could justify. Their distress, their intolerable misery, caused them to hope for improvement from any change, and therefore they accepted just what was offered; thus the religious reform was half effected, because a political, a social reform was necessary, and they were in confident expectation of the latter. In Germany the like circumstances produced the same results.

The oppression of the people is necessarily productive of this mischievous consequence that the moment it ceases, the moment the force which kept down the spring is removed, it flies up with violence and shatters whatever is above it. The people is a ravenous beast only when roused to fury by ill usage and hunger. At Caen the tempest at length burst, and the Calvinists, after they had already in 1562 attempted in vain to take the castle, plundered for two days the churches and convents of the city, broke in pieces and burned such of the sacred utensils as appeared to them to be of no value, and, as I have before observed, spared not even the grave of the Conqueror and his consort Matilda. They then went to the town-house, and with audacious scorn demanded their wages.

The duke de Bouillon came from Rouen to restore order, as the old absurd system was called. But it was not long before Caen, after the battle of Dreux, fell entirely into the hands of the Calvinists; and there Admiral Coligny directed for a time the affairs of the Reformers.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew was succeeded at Caen by a tacit peace or armistice. The adherents of the old and the new faith here saw with equal horror how treachery and murder were resorted to as the last weapons alike of the old and the new doctrines.

The struggles of the Reformation in Caen were followed by a repose which but rarely furnished

occasion for remarkable incidents. Henry IV. presented the city with such an occasion. He had expelled the Jesuits, but that king who could say: "Paris is surely worth a mass," could not need much persuasion to recall the Jesuits, if their presence was more advantageous to him than their exile. Accordingly, he repealed, in 1606, the edict of banishment. Caen was not one of the cities where the new edict allowed the Jesuits to seek a harvest. In the following year, the Jesuits sent one of their fraternity to the king, to solicit, in the name of the city, the re-establishment of their order in Caen. This petition in the name of the city was only an innocent Jesuitical stratagem, and when the civic authorities heard how their name had been misused, exposed the pious fraud. The king, nevertheless, granted in 1607 the request of the Jesuits, and ordered the city to provide them with a building. The people opposed this measure with all their might, and it was not till after several energetic protests that, yielding to power, they suffered that to be done which they deemed themselves unable to prevent. But the courage to oppose the almighty will of an absolute sovereign, in a case where reason justifies this opposition, attests the independence of the Norman citizens.

Spiritual interests are unfortunately those whose importance the people in general are least capable of appreciating, otherwise the inhabitants of Caen would probably have made a stronger opposition to the re-introduction of the Jesuits. At least they,

as well as the majority of the inhabitants of Lower Normandy, showed a few years later, in 1639, that they were any thing but pliable in regard to material interests when they thought themselves wronged. A new tax upon leather excited riots in all Lower Normandy, especially in Caen, Avranches, Coutances, Valogne, St. Lo, and Bayeux. The shoemakers and cobblers every where gave the signal for rising, by their resistance to the officers of government who attempted to levy the tax; and in almost every place were they aided and abetted in that resistance by the people. At Caen they plundered the house of the captain of the tax, who escaped with great difficulty. The government was obliged to send a detachment of troops to Caen, under whose protection the rioters were punished, broken alive upon the wheel, hanged (nine of them in Caen), condemned to the galleys and exile, and their houses pulled down. And with such barbarous punishments those in power conceived that the barbarous conduct of the people was expiated, and that they had given them an impressive lesson.

The revocation of the edict of Nantes, preceded in other places by the dragonades, the butchery of the Protestants by the soldiers of a Louis XIV., who were expressly sent on this mission, was attended with the most baneful consequences for Caen; and from this period dates the decline of the city, which has been regularly progressive till almost the present time. Thirteen years later, in 1698, the intendant of Caen wrote

in answer to the inquiries of the court: "Since the year 1685, most of the wealthiest merchants and traders, who were dissenters, have gone abroad, and commerce has almost entirely forsaken the district of Caen." And yet a tall column in honour of Louis XIV. graces the Place royal of that city!

Thenceforward Caen merely vegetated, and it was not till the revolution that it regained any political importance. Its former flourishing trade it has not recovered, though Norman perseverance and industry have of late much improved the condition of the city.

A single name, that of Charlotte Corday, sums up the epoch of the revolution, and the interest of the people in behalf of it. Caen was from the first moment devoted to the revolution, and, so early as 1791, the citizens had proved their attachment by a conflict with a regiment in garrison there. They forced it to leave the place, after taking prisoner the officer by whom it was commanded. He attempted on the following day to disarm the civic guard which was escorting him to be examined, and was shot dead. In the following year, a second victim was sacrificed to the popular fury. M. Bageux, the procureur-general sindic, was accused of being in correspondence with the ex-ministers, Montmorin and de Lessert, and executed in the Place St. Sauveur, after he had in vain endeavoured to justify himself before the assembled people.

These two occurrences prove at any rate that the revolution found zealous partisans in Caen.

But they did not spring from the character of the people, any more than the Vandalism shown at a later period by certain royalists, who, after dragging the bust of Napoleon, by Canova, with a rope, through the streets, dashed it in pieces; these were only the effects of the first excitement and the work of individuals. The whole province soon expressed itself in favour of the more moderate party in the Convention, for the Gironde and against the Mountain. The Normans, upright and energetic, and with true German spirit wishing for reform without revolution, did not perceive that the French revolution was produced by necessity, and by the contradition of those who wanted no reform; that the fate of the latter depended on that of the former; that the revolution, and reform along with it, could not be saved but by the revolution. Add to this that Normandy had for centuries considered itself as a country independent of France; and that of course the notion of a federative republic entertained by the Girondists could not but find partisans there.

Caen was one of those cities which declared themselves most warmly for the Gironde, and against the Mountain, and boldly proclaimed their sentiments to the Convention. On the 29th of April, 1793, the general council of the commune of Caen voted an address to the Convention, to this effect: "Justly concerned at the atrocities which brigands are incessantly committing against representatives who possess our entire confidence, we should be

guilty towards our country, if, on so alarming an occasion, we were indifferent to the treasons of villains, whom plots hatched by crime have placed in the distinguished rank of representatives of the people. How can one help recoiling with horror at the sight of the profound abyss in which the Marats, the Robespierres, the Dantons, and many other members, have striven to drown liberty! Let those venomous and sanguinary reptiles tremble! Let them know that twenty-four millions of men have not sworn in vain to be free! Let them lastly learn that a great nation, weary of their iniquities, incensed by their misdeeds, is preparing to take signal vengeance for atrocities not less frequent than sacrilegious!"

The noble spirit of the commune of Caen is expressed in this address, though one may be disposed to consider the reign of terror as at that time necessary for France in general. Revolutions are possible only where reform is impossible. France, having once arrived at the point at which the revolution commenced, was forced to submit to the consequences of this necessity, in order to preserve the seed from perishing along with the first unripe and bitter fruit.

Six weeks after the presentation of this address, on the 31st of May, 1793, Henriot stormed the Tuileries, and the Girondists succumbed to the Mountain, which, like an avalanche, rolled down upon and crushed them. Several of the Girondists fled first to Evreux, and afterwards to Caen,

where General Wimpfen, then commandant of the coasts of the Channel, organised the Girondist insurrection, which was finally quelled by the battle of Vernon.

Charlotte Corday had meanwhile avenged the Girondists on Marat. Fate decreed that this bloodthirsty fanatic should not quit the stage unpunished, and a delicate female was the instrument chosen to execute the sentence. The deed itself, however, served only to confirm an old maxim, that a political murder *never* accomplishes the object at which the murderer aims; and that, from Brutus to Charlotte Corday, this rule has not found a single exception. Marat's death only facilitated the victory over the Girondist insurrection, for assassination disarms the courageous man of that party which it is designed to benefit, while it irritates and incenses those against whom it is directed; it paralyses, like a spell, the friends of the murderer, and is a fury inciting the enemies of the latter to revenge. Never was the reign of terror stronger than the day after the death of Marat. In this very deed and its consequences might be seen a proof of the necessity at that time of the system of terror, after the hideous Marat, who at first animated it with his breath, had ceased to live. The fate of the human race depends on other laws than the will, the caprice, and the perversity of a single individual, whether he is called Cæsar, Charlemagne, or Napoleon: for, where we often imagine that we perceive the will of man only,

the eye of the inquirer who looks deeper discovers a higher law, which the hero, a creature of accident—like Napoleon, for instance, beginning at school, and finishing his career chained to a rock amidst the wide ocean—unconsciously obeys.

Notwithstanding the way in which the people of Caen had supported the Girondist insurrection, that city witnessed no executions during the reign of terror. The then rulers of France were probably too well acquainted with the people, and knew that the Norman may be conquered, not subdued; and besides, Robespierre and his adherents meant only to strike the heads, and left the unguarded flock in quiet.

That the Normans, and especially the people of Caen, are not to be affronted with impunity, they once shewed, by a lesson which they gave to the soldiers of Napoleon. In 1800, an officer of the 43d demi-brigade, then quartered at Caen, insulted a citizen; the people took the part of the latter, and drove the troops out of the city.

I subjoin one more incident, which, in its romantic turn, proves as clearly as possible the manly spirit and the sense of right which animated the Normans, even in opposition to the rule of Napoleon.

An emigrant, named Dascher, was in Normandy in 1810. The police knew that he was intriguing in the province in favour of the royal family, and offered a considerable reward for his apprehension. Dascher came to Caen, intending to embark there

for England, and found an asylum with a Madame de Vaubadon, who had squandered her property in extravagance. The police soon discovered that Dascher was concealed in her house, and offered her a sum of money to pay her debts, and a pension for life, if she would deliver him up The bargain was struck, and she led her protégé, upon the pretext that he might embark at Luc, into a neighbouring wood, where the agents of the police fell upon and murdered him. The leader of this expedition, named Toisson, was presented with the same order that Napoleon wore at his bosom, and that *he* called the cross of honour. Such was the reward bestowed by the hero of a hundred battles! But the Normans, though then much attached to Napoleon, entertained different sentiments. The conduct of Vaubadon in the affair became public, and when, a few days afterwards, she appeared flaunting in a red dress at the theatre, the indignation of the audience was not to be repressed, and from all quarters proceeded shouts of "A bas la robe rouge! à bas la robe du sang!" The people broke open the door of her box, and tore the obnoxious garment from her back. Nothing but the interference of the police prevented the summary infliction of a milder punishment than actually awaited her. From that hour she became a maniac, and paid the penalty of her misdeed in a cell in the madhouse of Caen.

CHAPTER XIX.

Character of the People—Evasive Answers—Caution of the Normans in making promises—Cause of this reserve—Litigious Character ascribed to the Normans—Apology for this propensity—Singing unusual in Lower Normandy—Rhymed Pleasantries of the Fishermen—Cider; its effects—Anecdotes illustrative of the Character of the people.

CALLING one day on Monsieur F——, I found him engaged in a dialogue with his servant. The subject of it was a vase which had been broken.

"Have you broken this vase?"

"What do you think, sir?"

"Has any one been in the room besides yourself?"

"Not that I know of."

"Did you lock the door when you left it?"

"I am in the habit of doing so."

"Did the cat get into the room?"

"I believe not."

"How comes it to be broken, then?"

"I cannot tell."

"Have you been dusting the room?"

"I do that every morning while you are at breakfast."

"Perhaps you threw it down then from the mantelpiece?"

"I have not touched it."

My friend looked at me impatiently, and put an end to the examination. All these half evasive answers appeared to me striking proofs of the poor fellow's guilt. No sooner had he left the room than I communicated my opinion to his master, knowing that an accident, even though arising from awkwardness, could not be attended with any serious consequences for the servant, who was the most faithful creature in the world. F——, however, assured me that I was mistaken, and that, in spite of his evasive answers, the man was innocent. "You are not well acquainted," said he, "with our people in Lower Normandy"—the departments of Calvados, l'Orne, and la Manche form Lower Normandy, those of La Seine inferieure and l'Eure Upper Normandy—"otherwise these answers would not strike you. It is more than a mere proverb that the Norman never says *ni ver, ni nenni*—either yes or no."

Since my attention was directed to the subject, I have often found the proverb verified. It is an old observation, for centuries ago the Norman seems to have been equally reluctant to give a direct answer. The abbé Rivière, in his "Eloge des Normands," (Paris, 1748) thus expresses himself upon this point. "Where is there to be found greater love of truth than among these people? They are so fearful of telling a lie, they have such

an abhorrence of this fault, that they will not venture to say either yes or no, when you want them positively to assert or to deny something. They employ certain circumlocutions in order to evade doing either one or the other. This has drawn upon them the character of liars, and caused them to be decried as people who are prone to break their word. But those who thus traduce them have certainly not taken notice that they never promise to do a thing, but merely say that they can or cannot do it; in omitting to do it, therefore, they break no engagement, as they have given no positive promise. Thus, instead of treating them as liars, we ought rather to admire their caution and their shyness of any untruth whatever."

To prevent misconception, I must add at once that this eloge is not a satire, but meant in perfect earnest. On the whole, however, the notion of the good abbé may be based on truth; for whoever would confine himself strictly to the truth must indeed strike the words *yes* and *no* out of his dictionary. The Norman is in general a lover of truth, and this quality may certainly have its share in his profound and irresistible aversion to yes and no.

But the history of Normandy sufficiently accounts for this reserve. From the moment that the tract of country now called Normandy is mentioned in the annals of history, we find the inhabitants for a thousand years and more under the iron yoke of a foreign conqueror. Cæsar led thither his legions; the Saxons had been there before him, and they

followed him. After them came the Franks, then the Normans, and when the Normans had conquered England, the English came in their turn and conquered Normandy. This incessant change may account for the caution of the Normans in their expressions. The juvenile impressions of nations are permanent. But the most grievous curse for Normandy was that which William the Conqueror brought upon it by his expedition against England. To the Normans who emigrated to that country, plunder and robbery became a second nature. The petty lords took example from their great leader, and when England afforded no more food for their rapacity, they came back to their native country to practise the lesson which they had there learned. Not only the blood spilt in the conquest calls for vengeance upon the conqueror, but that also which is shed in consequence of it. Nature, as well as history, shows us that she has a law which decrees that robbers shall tear one another in pieces on account of the plunder; that the sons of conquerors—the greatest pest that can afflict humanity—destroy each other. The generals of Alexander, the sons of Charlemagne, those of William the Conqueror, obeyed this fearful law of fate, of universal justice. The conquest itself may be beneficial for the future, like the pestilence, which purifies the air but is nevertheless the pestilence. Conquest is in general attended with this immediate consequence, that the assistants of the conqueror, the moment they are released

from the curb of his strong hand, fall foul of one another, to continue among themselves that part which they saw their lord and master perform. Normandy is an evidence of this truth, and for nearly a century after William the Conqueror's death, almost incessant war was waged between his sons and those of his companions in arms.

All this could not be without influence on the character of the people, and furnishes a natural explanation of that which at first sight appears strange. The people were obliged to be grave, reserved, and cautious, for they were wretched. They could not help becoming mistrustful; they had none in whom they could confide. The inhabitants of the meanest village were split into parties, and a plain yes to the simplest question might be a crime in the eyes of him by whom it was asked. When the Romans came, it was dangerous to reply in the affirmative to the question: "Are you a Gaul?" Under the Saxons and Normans, the state of things was much the same. When England ruled Normandy, and contested the possession of it with France, the Norman no longer knew whether he ought to call himself Norman, French, or English. During the civil wars, or rather the wars of the nobles, in which the latter chastised the people whenever they meant to fly in the face of the sovereign, in the wars of the Huguenots, in short, a direct answer to a simple question was frequently liable to put life in peril; for it might communicate welcome information to the inquirer, the spy, and cost the

poor peasant his life for betraying his lord or himself, he knew not how. I cannot help thinking that the Normans have gone through a school, in which they must perforce have learned caution, reserve, and distrust. In Caen, this jealousy is still carried so far, that most of the citizens make real state secrets of their family affairs; and it is only with extreme precaution that they afford a peep at them to any one not belonging to the house.

I ascribe to the same circumstances the grounds for the popular notion which represents the Normans as fond of lawsuits. Conquest of itself renders the idea of property unsettled; for no one then knows whether that which belonged to him yesterday he can to-day call his own. It must further be considered that the wars of the nobles and the priests perpetuated in Normandy the times of the conquest. The peasant was the weaker party: he had no weapon but his right, no shield but the court of justice; and neither the conquest nor even internal wars were able utterly to destroy the German institutions, the courts, and especially the *Echiquier*. Thus the peasant had nothing left but this last protection, and he acquired the habit of appealing to it whenever he felt his weakness. We must, moreover, bear in mind that the Norman had a national jurisprudence, that he himself pronounced the verdict, and must therefore have been acquainted with the laws in order to account to ourselves for the manner in which he acquired the character of litigious. In all other parts of France there was

no law for the peasant, and of course he could not commence suits against the clergy and the nobles. But these classes found in Normandy a people which defended itself when any attempt was made to wrong it, and for this reason alone they called it litigious. This was natural. The statistics of the administration of justice show that the Norman provinces are by no means those in which most lawsuits are carried on; though, in a country so highly cultivated, and the seat of all possible branches of industry, interests must clash more than elsewhere, and of course afford abundant occasions for lawsuits.

All this, however, could not alter the notion so firmly established in France as to have become proverbial, and thus the Norman is and will continue to be decried as *processier*. The panegyrist of Normandy adverts to this subject also, and it is amusing to listen to him. "These people, you will say, must be malicious and quarrelsome in the highest degree, since they are so fully occupied in settling their differences and litigations. Say, on the contrary, that they have an unbounded attachment to justice; and if they go to law with their fellow-citizens for what in other countries may be considered a trifle, the cause is certainly not difficult to be discovered. It is this, that these Catos of Normandy regard the smallest faults as capital crimes which are not to be atoned for, and do not feel easy in their conscience if they do not denounce those who commit them, if they do not watch all their

steps and actions, nay, even tempt and try them now and then by involving them in petty quarrels. Have not the Normans been regarded as intolerably litigious, and seeking only quarrels and suits? Have they not been considered among all the people who surround them as a public pest? Have they not been treated as false witnesses and calumniators, while their only object was to help others to attain the same improvement at which they have arrived themselves? What a nice sense of justice in their mode of proceeding! They summon their fellow-citizen before the judge, for instance, sometimes on account of a trifling affront occasioned by a slight gust of passion; sometimes on account of a piece of ground which a crafty neighbour has taken possession of; at others on account of an inconsiderable damage done by an irrational animal to one of their fields, and for a thousand similar and equally trivial matters. They keep their advocates occupied for years together: whole reams of paper can scarcely hold the writings belonging to their suits; and wherefore all these pains and expences, if not the consequences of their love of order and justice, for which they not only spare nothing, but even sacrifice all they have in the world, presupposing that justice is honestly administered?"

Bravo! that I call making a virtue of necessity. The good abbé might himself serve for a most striking proof of the litigiousness of the Normans, for he is, as we have seen, an excellent advocate of a desperately bad cause, and thus a *demonstratio ad*

oculos of this peculiarity of the honest Normans, who have been hunted for three thousand years by all sorts of dogs. The abbé goes on and says: "It is not possible to catch them in a trap; and if they never cheat any body, neither do they ever suffer others to cheat them." Here it must be confessed that he is quite right, and that it is extremely difficult to trick a Norman, for he has been brought up in a severe school, by which his wits have been sharpened. One can scarcely help wondering that, notwithstanding this discipline, he has not lost his goodnature, his integrity, and his buoyant spirits.

In the environs of Caen the peasant is more grave than in any other part of Lower Normandy. The decreasing prosperity of the country sufficiently accounts for this phenomenon. Here you rarely hear a song, and as rarely see the country-people dancing. A popular custom, which I observed several times in the evening, appeared to me a proof that formerly the people of Caen were fond of singing and mirth as well as their northern consanguineous neighbours. In spring, countless shoals of small fish, called *la monte*, ascend the Orne. Both banks of the river are then a scene of bustle in the evening. The fishermen repair thither, each provided with a lantern, which they hold over the water, and, enticing the fish to the surface by the light, they catch them in that manner. Merely as a picturesque scene, this custom was sufficiently interesting to me. But I soon perceived that these people called to one another in the dark, and seemed

to be conversing together. When once my attention was drawn to these curious dialogues, I listened to them more closely, and then heard that the answer invariably rhymed to the question, and that in this manner the fishermen bandied rhymed pleasantries, keen witticisms, and even abuse and contumely, from bank to bank. To hold this kind of dialogue is called *s'engueuler*, to *jaw* one another; and I was informed by natives that it is customary on other occasions, such as certain labours in the fields and woods. I believe I am not far wrong in supposing this practice to be akin to the Tyrolese and Swiss alternate songs, and in concluding that, in former times, before this sturdy race became morally and physically deteriorated by war, calamity, and distress, the Normans, instead of *jawing* one another, sang their songs, as is still the case here and there in Germany, in Sweden, in Switzerland, and in the Tyrol. Nations and their characters have their ruins, and this *engueuler* is surely one of them, which attests the ancient joyousness of the Lower Normans, who now are often so extremely grave.

The Norman is peaceable and honest, brave and hardy, bold and resolute. But you frequently see all these qualities degenerate, especially when the cider has been pushed about too briskly. This beverage, so innocent at first sight, is deceptive and mischievous, like the Norman himself sometimes. Intoxication with cider is more dangerous than with wine, beer, or even with ardent spirits; for it turns

men into wild beasts, and makes them irritable and quarrelsome; it is therefore no uncommon thing that at a drinking bout where the cider has been dealt out liberally, some of the party have fractured sculls or broken arms, or at least black eyes, to carry home with them. "Tell me what company you keep, and I will tell you who you are," is an adage that may often be true; but equally true is this saying, "Tell me what you drink, and I will tell you who you are."

As Caën is the capital, and, as it were, the representative of Lower Normandy, I will subjoin two or three anecdotes, which are, perhaps, better adapted than any reasoning to characterise the people of that country.

In the first place, here is an instance of the fondness for lawsuits and chicanery, as it is customary to charge the Lower Normans with that propensity. The circumstance happened not long ago. A village priest brought his chorister before a court of justice on the following charge: "My chorister is extremely ambitious, and wishes to have every thing his own way. In consequence of a dispute between him and me, occasioned by his ambitious pretensions and his obstinacy, I forbade him in future to sing or even to appear in the chorister's chair. But this obstinate fellow, caring not the least for my prohibition, told me that he was determined to sing in spite of my teeth; and next Sunday, during the office *solemne majus*, he seized the chorister's chair and clapped himself down in it, as though he were

lord and master there. As I would not make any disturbance at the moment, I suffered him to occupy the chair as usual, but this ambitious, obstinate, and malicious singer, impelled by a feeling of revenge, pitched the singing in a false key, and totally upset mine. This act of treachery produced the greatest effect: every body laughed, and I was forced to stop and begin again in the right key; and I call upon the court to award punishment for the affront offered me before all my parishioners." It is difficult to say who was in fault here, whether the priest, or the singer, who was a Lower Norman; perhaps both.

Another circumstance, which likewise occurred of late years, is a proof of the cunning of the Lower Normans. A butcher of Caen had bought a calf of a cattle-jobber in the environs. Half a gallon of cider was to clench the bargain, and the butcher jocosely observed in conversation, among other things, that he meant to smuggle the calf into the town in broad daylight, and to pass the *octroi* publicly, without paying. The cattle-dealer declared this to be impossible, and a wager was accordingly laid between him and the butcher, who merely made this condition, that he should lend him his dog for half an hour. He put the dog into a large sack, which he threw over his shoulder, and away he trudged to the city. On reaching the Octroi, he declared that he had nothing to pay, as there was only a dog in the sack, which he had just bought and shut up that he might not find his way

back to his former master. The officers of the Octroi would not take his story on trust, and insisted on seeing the dog. The butcher was therefore obliged to open his sack, and the dog naturally availed himself of the opportunity to run away. Off scampered the butcher after him, scolding and swearing all the way. In a quarter of an hour, he was again at the Octroi, with the sack on his shoulder as before. "You have given me a pretty chase," said he, peevishly. Next day he invited the officers to partake of a veal cutlet, with which, having won the wager, he treated them and the cattle-dealer.

The following anecdote is of older date, but not less characteristic. Louis XVI., in his journey through Normandy, heard a peasant in the environs of Caen singing a jovial popular song, and was so pleased with it that when it was finished he cried, *Bis! bis!* The peasant inquired what that meant, and was told that it signified again, or once more. Accordingly, he sang the song a second time, on which the king gave him a piece of gold. The peasant cried *Bis! bis!* and would probably have repeated the cry, if the king, laughing heartily, and giving him a second piece of money, had not said, *Assez! assez!*

Another anecdote, though of a graver kind, is characteristic of the acuteness and quick resolve of the Normans. The crew of a ship had, during a tremendous storm, escaped from it in the long boat. The provisions were soon consumed, and hunger

impelled the seamen to cast lots which of them should die to prolong the lives of the rest. The lot fell upon a Norman, who immediately rose, and with an oar shattered the scull of another seaman, coolly saying that they must first eat up their dead comrade, and it would be his turn next.

All these anecdotes relate to persons of the lower class, and I think that they may serve to relieve me from the necessity of entering upon further illustrations of the character of the Lower Normans.

CHAPTER XX.

Learned Societies in Caen — Remarks on the Society of Antiquaries—Dependence of the Provinces on Paris in regard to the Arts and Sciences — Efforts of M. de Caumont and M. Lair — Soirée given in honour of the latter—Newspapers and State of Parties in Caen — University — Obscurity of the Professors — Students — Public Instruction — Organisation of the Royal College — Strictures on Public Education — Progress of Scientific Education—State of Musical Science in Normandy—Conservatoire de la Musique.

CAEN was formerly called *la ville de sapience*, and I believe that it still deserves the name, only with this difference, that, whereas former times produced results, at the present day all is confined to aspirations. The number of literary societies here prove that there are people enough in Caen who take an active interest in the sciences. Ever since 1652 the city has possessed an "Academie des Sciences, Arts, et Belles Lettres," which only suspended its labours for a time during the revolution, but resumed them in 1800. Besides this general society, there are several particular ones. A "Société d'Agriculture et de Commerce," established in 1761, was dissolved by the revolution, but re-

vived in 1801. It endeavours, by the publication of its Archives, which circulate chiefly among enlightened country-people, by exhibitions of manufactured goods, and recently by horse-races, to effect improvements in agriculture, commerce, and the breeds of cattle. A "Société de Médecine," founded in 1802, likewise excites as far as lies in its power a zeal for the study of medicine, since 1825, by means of prizes. A "Société Linnéenne de la Normandie," instituted in 1823, publishes annually a volume of Memoirs, and strives in this way to diffuse a taste for the study of natural history. It numbers thirty-five members and two hundred and eighty correspondents. Since 1823, Caen has had also a "Société des Antiquaires de Normandie," which likewise publishes, from time to time, a volume of Memoirs containing some of the most learned papers on the antiquities of Normandy. Lastly, in 1832, an "Association Normande" was formed at Caen. "The object of the Association Normande," says the first article of its statutes, "is to further the progress of public morality, elementary instruction, industry, agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, in the departments composing the former province of Normandy. It will not do or authorize any thing that is contrary to the principles of freedom of trade; it claims the support of all men of talent belonging to the province, and will feel honoured by their communications." It is obvious that the object of this institution is rather philanthropic than literary. In

1834 it published an "Annuaire des Cinq Departements de la Normandie," in which are to be found very useful things among others too erudite, perhaps, for the nature of the society. It is composed of about four hundred members, who pay a yearly contribution of five francs.

It would lead me too far if I were to enter upon all the peculiarities of these different societies; I shall therefore confine myself to a few general observations. One of the most important of these societies is that of the antiquaries. It has very learned and very industrious members; but there is one awkward circumstance connected with antiquaries in general. I once read somewhere that shepherds, by continual association with the objects of their care, contract somewhat of the nature of the sheep; and the antiquary is mostly in the like predicament. He buries himself among antiquities till he involuntarily becomes himself a sort of social antique, so encrusted with the dust and dirt of hundreds and thousands of years, that it is difficult to recognize in him a member of the living generation. To this class belong the majority of the Norman antiquaries, at least in a literary point of view; for, in company, the Frenchman is brisk, lively, and juvenile, even though he is already standing with one foot in the grave and the other upon a ruin. So much as I have read of the Memoirs of the Society of Antiquaries of Caen goes no further than this, to give to a stone, a wall, a ditch, an old coin, an importance, which, impartially

considered, they are very often not found to possess; or which, at least, is scarcely in any instance sufficient to justify the exclusive devotion of time and study to the subject. Most of the antiquaries of Normandy are but journeymen in the science; I have not met with a single architect among them: and they seem as yet to have no suspicion whatever that nothing can be constructed with all these stones, and walls, and ditches. Upon the whole, I admit, such researches are praiseworthy, but it is a pity that they should be considered as the main point.

The isolation, the dependence, in a word, the minority, in which Paris contrives to keep the provinces, is again one of the principal causes of this state of things. Love must be returned before it becomes a truly living passion. So too the love of science: that also requires to be acknowledged, appreciated, encouraged, requited: but it does not fare thus in the provinces in France. It is owing to centralisation that Havre, for instance, though only eighteen leagues from Caen, has scarcely any scientific intercourse with the latter, and there is certainly not in Havre a complete set of all those publications of the literary societies of Caen. Some of them I did find in the town-library; and when they were brought to me, I had to cut open the virgin leaves with the paper-knife. They are scarcely to be seen, indeed, at the places of public resort, the coffee-houses, and reading-rooms in Caen itself; though they are obliged to provide themselves with the "Revue de Paris," the "Revue

des deux Mondes," the "Revue brittannique," and other periodicals of the capital.

The oppressive, the demoralizing, tendency of this state is felt in all the provinces of France, and in all parts of the kingdom the most distinguished men are rising against this mental despotism. At Caen, M. de Caumont is the champion of provincial emancipation. Very eminent as an archæologist, he dedicates his fortune and his time to science, and especially to the reform of the provinces. Still in the prime of life, he is the founder of most of the literary societies recently established in Caen. It was he too who first introduced literary congresses into France. At his instigation, the first literary congress held in that country met on the 20th of July, 1833, in Caen, and was attended by upwards of two hundred literary and scientific men. The second congress took place at Poitiers, a third at Douay, and it is possible that in time this institution may prove beneficial to the provinces, but its influence in promoting their emancipation was at first scarcely perceptible.

The best antidote to poison is poison—that is to say, against the centralisation of Paris nothing but a firm centralisation in the provinces can lead to a happy result. This experiment has not yet been tried in France. People feel there the pressure of the capital, but individuals only have ever attempted to resist it. M. de Caumont has even committed the grand mistake of founding several new literary societies in Caen, instead of exerting himself to get

all those previously existing dissolved, or rather melted down into one. If Caen had one large society instead of five or six, and that one had at its command the united means of all, it might very soon attain importance, and through its organs force itself into notice in other places. This would be a difficult point to accomplish, for the partition of the provinces has called into existence there a number of inferior authorities, which all bow with the most Christian humility to the yoke of Paris, but are up in arms the moment any institution, or any distinguished man in the provinces, dares to oppose their omnipotence in their petty sphere. Difficult, however, as the remedy may be, it is the only one; for not till the provinces shall concentrate their scattered powers in this or that town or institution, will they be able to break the intellectual yoke of the capital.

Another name, highly and deservedly respected in Caen, is that of Lair. M. Lair is secretary of the Society of Agriculture and Commerce, and does a great deal of good in that situation. It was chiefly owing to him that prizes are given to the best farmers, that exhibitions of the productions of agriculture and manufactures take place, and that horse-races have recently been set on foot at Caen, for which he obtained prizes from the city and the government; though it is very likely that these competitions are expected to do more for improving the breed of horses in Normandy than they will accomplish.

M. Lair is a man who is animated with a sincere

love of the arts and sciences. He has written but little, and seems to make no pretensions to the character of a scholar—a circumstance that does the more honour to the soundness of his judgment. He has chosen for himself a vocation certainly not less creditable and much more beneficent, and become the patron of every enterprise for promoting art and science, the encourager of artists and literati. His house and his purse are ever open to those who claim his assistance in the name of art and science. He is rich; but, not satisfied with the interest of his property, as he had no children and none but wealthy relations, he gave it up for a life-annuity, which permits him to spend twice as much on his generous and laudable passion. If he were the favourite of an emperor—and he is infinitely more—future ages would speak of him as the Mæcenas of the nineteenth century. Honour to whom honour is due. And yet on such a man an English traveller, after receiving hospitality at his table, could strive to throw ridicule! It is right that the name of this traveller should be recorded—it was Dibdin, the bibliomaniac!

The arts and sciences have even penetrated in some degree into social life at Caen. I happened to be recommended to M. David, a merchant. On the very first day I met at his house with a clever young authoress, Mademoiselle Chuppin, who had obtained the prize for a History of Music in Normandy, and whose work had procured her access into all companies. I learned that this writer was the daughter

of a German mother, who, with the German blood and language, had imbibed a fondness for music. In the same company I found also a M. le Flaguais, a young poet, whose compositions are equally full of spirit and feeling.

A few days afterwards I was at a *soirée* at M. David's, which showed still more the influence of science on social life. M. Lair, who was about seventy, had exerted himself in making the arrangements for the first horse-races at Caen to such a degree that in a few days he fell ill, and his friends were apprehensive of losing him. M. David agreed with several artists and writers to celebrate his recovery; and the *fête* reflected as much honour on the giver as on him for whom it was given. As it appears to me to be somewhat illustrative of life at Caen, I shall say a few words on the subject.

Several persons who cultivate art and science, as well young as of maturer years, and many profane of both sexes, were invited. A young painter had made a picture of the race; Mademoiselle Chuppin, whom I have just mentioned, had written a spirited description of it; Le Flaguais had celebrated it in verse; and a young musician, whose name I have forgot, had composed a sort of concerto for violoncello and piano-forte, expressly for the occasion. It was indeed pleasing, and at the same time touching, to see how all had joined to pay deserved homage to the worthy veteran, and how each succeeding production devised to do him honour heightened his gratification, so that he at length exclaimed:—

"Vous voulez fêter ma convalescence, et vous me faites mourir de plaisir!" But it was not enough to lay modern art under contribution; ancient customs and melodies were pressed into the service. After a lively round dance, the men and the women separated and formed two long rows. The women, dancing in couples up to the men, sang a song, which was then repeated by the men, dancing, according to an ancient popular practice in Normandy. The words were by M. Flaguais, but the tune probably many hundred years old.

After the venerable object of their felicitations had retired, the younger part of the company indulged in the pleasure of dancing. From the beginning to the end of the *soirée*, there reigned among all present a tone of kindliness and familiarity which transformed strangers in the first ten minutes into friends and intimates.

Travellers always judge of the state of society in a town by those companies into which they happen to be introduced. This standard is as natural as it is fallacious. I conceive, however, that I am not far wrong in drawing conclusions from what I have seen at Caen respecting what I have not seen; for on that evening there were persons of all classes at M. David's, and they all took equal interest in the homage paid to the friend of art and science. The majority of the company, however, belonged to the higher ranks of the middle class; and one of my friends afterwards told me that a strait-laced stiffness pervades the aristocratic circles, as the Carlists, the

ancient noblesse of Normandy, have forgotten and learned less than those of the same order in any of the other provinces of France. On this point, however, I only speak from hearsay, and must leave to others the task of supplying accurate information respecting it.

Let me add a few words concerning the journals. In France the journals are real amphibia, living in the water and in the air, and having most of them cold blood. They are a thermometer of society, its opinions, and its wants, and the cold blood is therefore the more characteristic for the French of our days. Every French journal thrusts its head (*première part*) into the sphere of politics, wallows with its body (*faites diverses*) in the slough of egotism, and dabbles with its tail (*feuilleton*) in the stream of art and science. The members sometimes rebel against the trunk, which, however, in the end always retains the mastery. This amphibious nature of the French journals allows them to be talked of in conversation on every subject, whether politics, the arts, the sciences, social life, or whatever it may be, as they interfere in all, and in general mix the cards under the table.

At Caen there are two political papers, "Le Mémorial," and "Le Pilote de Calvados." The first is the paper of the government and all the ministers; the latter is the dull mirror of all the oppositions in Paris, from the Constitutionel to the National. The bourgeoisie, the middle class, and the people, are divided between these two principles. While

I was in Caen, a third political journal, "L'Avenir," was announced; M. Waner, known for a history of Caen, was to be at the head of it. The Carlists, notwithstanding their wealth and their numbers, have not yet set on foot a paper of their own; and a sort of legitimist *charivari*, "Le Momus Normand," dropped, after a short existence. The last election showed that the opposition had the majority among the electors; and the Carlists, when they came to be placed between the government and the opposition, secured the absolute majority to the latter.

Caen has not, as yet, a single literary periodical, properly so called. "Le Journal de Caen et de la Normandie," "L'Etudiant," "La Révue de Caen," "Le Momus," "La Révue de Calvados," successively arose and expired like ephemera: and even a more serious undertaking, "La Révue Normande," conducted by M. de Caumont, with the assistance of the ablest writers of Normandy, extended to no more than eight numbers, or two volumes. If we were thence to infer that the people of Caen and the Normans in general are indifferent to literature and science, we should wrong them; for, as I have already observed, you meet with the best reviews of Paris in all the reading-rooms, and in very many private houses. The editors of the publications enumerated above could not hit the proper tone, or acquire the necessary influence, as they were either too frivolous or too solid, like the "Révue Normande," too indigestible on account of its excessive

erudition, the stone that requires the stomach of an ostrich. M. Fonfrède, of Bordeaux, has shown that, if journals in the provinces fail to command a circulation, it is very often the fault of the editors only. He would be my pattern in regard to the way in which he brought his paper into repute. He forced Paris to take notice of him, and then became a celebrated person, and his paper, a journal that was much sought after and read. Whoever would be independent in the provinces as a writer must compel Paris to talk about him, and obtain testimonials from the capital. When he has accomplished this, he can labour effectively in his province. But the greater number of those who carry their point leave the country, and all are not so fortunate as to wear down their horns in Paris, like M. Fonfrède, or so independent as, after this is done, to return quietly to their province. But any one who, like the journalist of Bordeaux, acquires in Paris a reputation as a provincial writer, might, if he does not follow the stream and remove to the capital, contribute essentially to the emancipation of the provinces, for not till then is he recognised by the other men of talent there.

A person of any reflexion cannot stir a step in France out of Paris, but such ideas force themselves upon him. Intellectual liberty is scarcely less valuable than political. The dominion of the capital produces, in France, an intellectual slavery, such as scarcely ever subsisted before. A time will come when the slaves will rise and throw off their fetters.

Caen is indebted for its university to the English. It was founded in 1431 by the duke of Bedford, regent of France, in the name of Henry VI. Six years later, chairs of divinity, literature, and natural philosophy, were instituted. In 1440, pope Eugene IV. confirmed the university and its privileges, and appointed the bishop of Bayeux chancellor. Soon afterwards France regained possession of Normandy. The university, as an English institution, was dissolved by Charles VII., but immediately re-established, and the chair of civil law alone was left vacant from 1450 to 1552. The French revolution dissolved it at a period when foreign wars rendered a firm centralisation of all material and moral energies absolutely necessary, and when a feeling of this necessity silenced for a time all other considerations. In 1801, it was again restored, and it consists of a *faculté de droit*, a *faculté des sciences*, a *faculté des lettres*, and an *école secondaire de médecine*.

There is not a professor belonging to this university whose name is known beyond the walls of the city in which he resides: indeed, in all France, I know of but one professor of a provincial university who has established a reputation. Lallemand, of Montpelier, is known and esteemed in Paris and abroad: but he is an exception, and it is perhaps as much owing to his political principles, to his opposition to the government, as to his erudition and his skill as an operator, that his fame has spread from Montpelier to Paris.

Far be it from me to assert that most of the professors of the university of Caen may not be very learned and very clever men: all I say is that not a creature in France knows any thing about their learning and their cleverness. Circumstances are as much to blame for this as their own conduct. Paris is France. This axiom is unfortunately but too true in many respects. Whoever cannot live in Paris must at least have friends there, who proclaim his merits, who are his representatives, as it were, if he means not to be buried and forgotten in his provincial town. This is the reason why all who surpass the ordinary standard betake themselves to Paris, why you very rarely find in the provincial towns a man really distinguished in art or science. Every Frenchman who feels within him a higher calling, feels also, on account of this very calling, the necessity for leaving his birthplace and directing his steps to Paris. He, who, whether artist or scholar, can be content to stay in his province, is either a man of no pretensions, no ambition, and may produce much that is excellent in privacy, or more commonly one whose mediocrity has more to fear than to hope from Paris, and who would be a cipher there, whereas he plays a part in his province. Of those unassuming and really clever men to whom I have just alluded, some are every where to be met with in the provinces; but the very circumstance that prevents them from seeking in Paris a wide field for their talents—their modesty—generally causes them to be unnoticed even in their province,

like the abbé Diguemarre in Havre, where he was not even known by name. Hence it is that persons of but moderate talents are left either for public life or as cultivators of art and science; and hence too mediocrity is with few exceptions the character of the provinces. The professors of Caen are subject to this universal influence; so that it is easy to infer why they are in the literary world almost unknown quantities, which, without doing them grievous injustice, we may designate by x and y.

Besides this cause of their lack of moral influence arising from centralisation, there are others of not less importance. The Frenchman is a very practical man, and on that account not much of a scholar. He studies only to arrive at this or that result. Voltaire was certainly one of the greatest scholars among the French, but he had studied only what was in his particular line, and confined his exclusive attention to such things as might be useful to him in attaining the goal which he proposed to himself—the overthrow of christianity, of the papal authority, and of the divine law. So long as he fights in this field we cannot withhold our admiration, for there nothing is unknown, nothing new to him; he selects facts the most trivial as well as the most important, to be employed in the proper place in his work of destruction. But the moment even the great Voltaire retires from the field of battle chosen by himself, he is an absolute ignoramus, who scarcely knows a cabbage from an oak, and writes history like a schoolboy. Such are the French.

But to return to the university of Caen. This aspiration after an immediate result, which actuates every Frenchman in all that he undertakes, leads students to consider the university as merely a sort of preparatory school, and the professors as merely the preparers for the examination. Whatever is not necessary for the examination is disregarded; and if this could be got over without matriculation and without professors, it is certain that very few students would take the trouble to attend the university. It is obvious that learning of itself must be a secondary matter, and that the professors must lose in the eyes of the students that halo which surrounds them in the universities of Germany and other countries. The natural consequence is that the French, confining themselves to special studies, very often make clever advocates, judges, notaries, physicians, chemists, and naturalists, but are unfit for anything out of their particular sphere, because, from the commencement of their studies, they almost without exception keep in view only the nearest result, the examination, which recurs annually for all the students at the universities of France.

Amidst so many untoward influences, the professors themselves can seldom rise to a higher position. Most of them have no intercourse whatever with the students, whom they only see at their lectures, that is to say, if they attend them. The teacher is a stranger to the scholar, the scholar to the teacher; and how can it be otherwise, since the students regard the professors by no means as the

representatives of literature and science, but merely as the footstool on which they must step to attain the bachelor's degree! This state of things sufficiently explains why the professors of the provincial universities of France are, as such, wholly without consequence or influence.

The students in France do not form, as in other countries, a distinct class from the other citizens, with their own laws, customs, and even language. Neither from the behaviour nor the dress of a young man can you distinguish whether he is a student, a tradesman, or a clerk. There are some of the students who lead dissipated lives, and spend their time and their money as jovially as any Oxford collegians: but their pleasures do not bear the stamp of college life. A dashing lad of this class, who is frequently called, at French universities, *viveur*, is a regular customer at the coffee-house, where he plays at billiards with every one who has time and inclination, and familiarly thous the marker. He takes his cup of coffee, his *petit verre*, frequently a small bowl of mulled wine or punch out of thimble glasses, and finishes with a glass of water and sugar. In the evening he goes in general to the theatre, where he plays a principal part as critic, in spite of pit and boxes, claps or hisses as he pleases, kicks up a disturbance, gets into a quarrel, and challenges two or three of his neighbours. Ten to one the next morning the duel is transformed into a breakfast, with plenty of wine, oysters, and pasties. The genuine *viveur* of a French university keeps, as a

matter of course, his grisette, with whom he lives in a sort of marriage, which has its chains like lawful wedlock, and would therefore be an abomination to the students of most other countries.

Most of the students at Caen are natives of the environs, and sons of honest farmers, or dealers in butter and cheese, cattle or horse-jobbers. The height of their ambition is to become in time avoué or notary in a petty country town. Many have already served several years as clerks in the office of an avoué or notary, and therefore look very respectable. The majority of the Caen students betray their Low Norman origin: they are more grave and reserved than those of other French provincial universities. Many can scarcely become used before their last year to the somewhat higher kind of life which they find at Caen, and rejoice to get back again to their native town and to their *étude*, as they call the office of notaries and avoués. The shyness of this class of students is frequently ludicrous. In an excursion that I once made from Caen, I was seated beside such a youth, whose home was at Pont l'Evêque, and who was going to Caen to be matriculated. At first he was extremely communicative, but when, the elections having taken place a few days before, I chanced to ask two or three questions concerning the political spirit prevailing in his native place, he became silent and thoughtful, and assured me in a solemn tone that he never concerned himself about politics, nay, that as *clerc d'avoué* he considered it wrong to form any

opinion upon political questions. The poor fellow, as I now plainly perceived, mistook me for a spy; and it was impossible to regain his confidence. I would have given a good deal to read the account of his journey, in which he would no doubt acquaint his principal, Monsieur l'Avoué of Pont l'Evêque, with his alarming adventure, and the imminent danger which he had been in. Students of this class are frequently called Beotians.

Public instruction in France is further advanced in regard to intellectual education than in other countries; but, in regard to moral education, it is generally in a deplorable state. A few remarks relative to the organization of the Collége Royal of Caen, which belongs, on many accounts, to the superior institutions of its kind in France, will serve to confirm this opinion. The direction and administration of every college in France is committed, like that of Caen, to a *proviseur*, who has the general superintendence over the religion, morals, behaviour, studies, and corporeal welfare of the pupils. At his side he has a *censeur*, whose functions embrace all that concerns the instruction and discipline of the scholars, and who, in case of necessity, supplies the place of the proviseur. Under these two superiors are the *maîtres d'études*, who personally look after and direct the pupils when they are not engaged in the classes. They see to it that they perform their tasks, and repeat with them the lessons

which have been set them in the different classes. The religious instruction and preparation for the first communion are committed to the *aumonier* of the college.

In all the colleges of France the pupils consist partly of *internes*, partly of *externes*. The first live in the school itself, and are wholly consigned to the care of the proviseur, the censeur, and the maîtres d'études; the latter live at home with their families, and come only during school-hours. In Caen, in the years 1811 and 1813, the number of the *internes* was 220, that of the *externes*, 160; in 1824, out of 350 scholars, there were only about 120 *internes*; in 1830, the school increased considerably, and consisted of 280 *internes* and 170 *externes*. Since that time the number of the pupils has been steadily augmenting.

These numbers alone serve in some measure to characterise the progress of public instruction. The imperial government promoted it generally, though it considered the sciences entirely from the immediately practical, the military, point of view. The Restoration, on the contrary, neglected it, and its stupid partisans but too often threw obstacles in its way. The number of the pupils decreased. The revolution of July, and the struggle that immediately preceded it, gave a new impulse to all France, and hence it was that, from 1824 to the end of 1830, the number of pupils at Caen increased 100, or more than a fourth. The like increase, in equal, frequently still more striking, proportions, has taken place throughout all France.

At present, the college of Caen numbers nearly 200 *internes*, boys from ten to sixteen, to whom the school has to supply the place of their family. Most of these are the sons of the more wealthy citizens, who are able to pay a higher sum for schooling: most of them, too, are destined to prosecute their studies when they leave this institution, in order to qualify themselves for the higher offices. From them proceeds the élite of the State, while most of the *externes* continue their studies to a certain point, in order then to follow another calling, as artisans, tradesmen, merchants, &c.

The *internes*, therefore, are the pupils destined hereafter to form the more polished portion of society, the givers of the *ton*; and the great mass of the higher classes of France at this day have spent their youth at a *collége royal*, or at boarding-school, to which, upon the whole, the following observations apply in a still stronger degree.

I set out at once with declaring it to be my opinion that this way of tearing children from their families, and giving them up body and soul to the school, is the main cause of the increasing demoralisation in France. Here the place of the father, who superintends and directs the moral education of the children, is supplied by a *proviseur*, a *censeur*; and that of the mother, who watches step by step, animates, fosters this education, by a *maître d'études*. On the choice of these *maîtres d'études* every thing depends; and he who can effectively supply the place of a mother, as the guide of her son's morals,

would be a wonder, must be a man of high talent, of profound feeling, a real genius. If this institution is to produce only tolerable fruit, the *maîtres d'études* ought to be chosen with extreme caution, and only the ablest, the most polished men, and such as offer the highest guarantee in a moral respect, should be selected for the office. Precisely the reverse is done every where, without exception, in France. He only who is unfit for teacher, who is not sufficiently instructed himself to be able to instruct others, is content with such a situation, and is selected for it in the colleges and the boarding-schools. The pay of the ordinary teachers is at least double, frequently treble, or even four times as great as that of a *maître d'études*, who deems himself extremely fortunate if he receives from 400 to 600 francs. The *proviseur*, the *censeur*, the masters, and lastly the scholars themselves, look upon them as a kind of servants, above the porter and shoeblack, indeed, but forming an intermediate link between them and the teachers. Six such *maîtres d'études* have the inspection of about 200 boys, so that each of them is the moral director of 33 boys. If each of these boys had a *maître d'études* to himself, never would he be able to compensate for the influence of the family in a moral respect; but a man who has to exercise such a superintendence over 30 or more boys can at most attend only to the external behaviour of the pupils, if even to that. The little respect in which these persons are held by the superiors of the school, and

the defective education which obliges them to take such a situation, are no secret to the pupils, and destroy any possible influence which they might have over the latter. Thus the boy advances to adolescence and manhood without having ever imbibed the doctrines of morality at a living spring: and it would be again a wonder if such an education were not to produce a generation ready to open the door of the heart to every immorality, to the grossest egotism, to infidelity, and to the fiend that extinguishes all the social affections.

In regard to the scientific education, the education of the mind, which pupils receive in the French colleges, it must be confessed that great progress has been made in that of late years. But I much fear that these improvements will produce an unnatural precocity; and this appears the more probable when one sees boys who know every thing, and who are kept to their studies thirteen or fourteen hours a day, assuming the airs of men and joining in every conversation, as I have often enough witnessed in France.

The intellectual education of the boys in the college of Caen is committed to thirteen masters—three for the scientific instruction (in Latin and Greek) of the elementary classes; three professors and an assistant professor for the classes of grammar. The others give instruction in English, rhetoric, the French language and literature, mathematics, physics, philosophy, natural history, history, and geography. It is evident from this list that the

youths must in the end become finished scholars; but there would be no objection to that, if this erudition were not acquired at the expence of a greater good, if, while the mind is instructed, the heart were not wholly neglected. But the moment seems now to be not far distant, when the errors in the system of education adopted in France shall be corrected; for people have at least begun of late to speak of the immorality of the present society, and if the disease is once known it will not be long before a physician appears. A prohibition of all boarding schools, and of all boarders at the *colléges royaux*, would be, it is true, a rather violent but tolerably radical remedy.

Till the year 1830, scarcely one in five of the pupils in the college of Caen received instruction in the *arts d'agrément*—that is to say, music, dancing, fencing, and riding. In regard to music, a great change has of late taken place, and that to the infinite advantage of the people of Caen. Like science, music became a kind of social want, and next a branch of instruction. How this has been gradually accomplished, I shall let that clever young writer, Mademoiselle Emma Chuppin, inform the reader.

"Towards the end of the year 1757," says that lady, in her successful prize essay, *De l'état de la Musique en Normandie*, "the directors of the concerts (which had by way of exceptions been occasionally held before) presented a petition soliciting letters patent for their establishment. They were

told in reply that several large cities had in vain solicited the like favour, which his majesty had invariably refused, because concerts prevent youth from attending to studies which are more useful to the state than music. It appears nevertheless, that, in spite of the want of encouragement, these musical assemblies were held till 1792. Then came long years of mourning, during which the suppression of the *maîtrises* of the cathedrals, and the dispersion of the upper classes of society, caused any return to the delicious enjoyments of the art to appear impossible. Quiet, however, was gradually restored, and thus, after 1800, societies again arose, under the title of *Redoute*, partly devoted to dancing, partly to music.

"These first essays, subject to many interruptions, seemed to make the necessity for a solid institution more and more sensibly felt every day—such an institution as, while it should unite a great number of scattered talents, should serve to afford them the benefit of a noble emulation.

"Messrs. F. de Boislambert, L. de Coursanne, Robert and Alph. le Cavelier, opened, in the winter of 1824, a subscription, which was soon filled, and gave seven brilliant concerts, but they were not renewed in the following year.

"In 1826, Mr. Spencer Smith, who was joined by Messrs. Costy, Lair, de Caumont, &c., established a literary and musical society, with the title of *Cicilienne de Normandie.*

"At length, on the 8th of February, 1827,

M. de Montlivault, then prefect of our department, received from the minister of the interior the requisite permission for instituting the *Societé philharmonique du Calvados.*

"A professor, M. Graverand of Caen, whose compositions are universally known, was appointed director of the orchestra of the society. The commercial class gave the requisite rooms, and Count d'Orseville, the then mayor, accepted the presidency.

"But there was one obstacle difficult to be overcome, and which, if not removed, would render the intended concerts impracticable. The point was to prevail upon a quantity of talents, not familiar with publicity, to seek that applause which they had a right to expect. As for the ladies, in particular, it was necessary to conquer at once their timidity and their modesty. Beneficence achieved this victory. Collections were made for the poor, and an annual concert was given for their benefit. M. de Magny undertook the organisation of the orchestra and of the vocal department—an undertaking attended with many difficulties, but which seemed to belong by right to the composer of *Circé.* Nothing, in fact, was capable of daunting his zeal, and, thanks to his exertions, the wealth that we possessed was brought to light by him. The number of amateurs increased daily; one brilliant concert followed another, and the first artists of the capital, anxious to display their talents here, found not only the most friendly reception from the Philharmonic Society of the Calvados, but also the most unanimous support.

" The constantly progressive success of the concerts, the numerous applications for admission to them, the emulation which spread as if by magic through all classes, the arrival of several artists, all demonstrated the necessity of a singing school. M. Fr. d'Emiéville and Count d'Yson, a distinguished amateur of music, who has since rendered so many services to the society, showed all possible zeal for realising a plan which was designed to afford even to the poorest persons access to the study of music.

" On the proposal of the administrative council of the society, M. Guerrier, singing-master, and one of the ablest pupils of the institution of M. Choron (in Paris) and M. Beziers were appointed to conduct the singing school. Since that time, M. Lair, president of the Philharmonic Society, whose name alone calls forth the idea of the purest and most enlightened patriotism, has founded annual prizes for the most distinguished pupils.

" We have seen above that, till 1792, the *maîtrises* of the convents and cathedrals were the only regular institutions for instruction. Their abolition was still lamented by all the friends of the art, when, at the instigation of M. de St. Germain, the municipal council of Caen voted, in 1835, a *Conservatoire de Musique*. This institution, founded on a wider basis, promises to be the seminary of juvenile talents, which, trained and instructed from an early age, will in time spread themselves over all Normandy.

" The example that has been set is already pro-

ducing fruit in the principal towns of Normandy. Musical societies, both public and private, are everywhere springing up. Bayeux, Lisieux, St. Lo, Coutances, Cherbourg, Granville, &c. already possess philharmonic societies. The number of teachers is continually augmenting: twelve years ago there were only four or five in Caen, whereas now that city has more than fifty, who are scarcely adequate to the instruction of their numerous scholars.

"Music is thus become one of the first foundation stones of education; and if all the young persons who receive instruction in it are not called to become great artists, the majority at least will, as in Germany, possess a general acquaintance with this art."—So be it!

I have translated this whole passage because it is characteristic. This encroachment of art and science upon purely social life is a genuine German feature. So are those *redoutes*, where they danced and sang, and gave little concerts. In all the rest of France nothing of the sort took place, nor was there any thing to remind a stranger of the casinos and museums of Germany. It is the German blood in the veins of the Normans that we here see asserting its rights; and when in science they have once cleared away the great stones of archæology, against which they stumble at every step, when the seed of music which they have sown shall have produced its fruit, the Normans will prove that the native country of Corneille, of Bernardin de St. Pierre, of Chateaubriand, of Casimir Delavigne,

and of Armand Carrel, need not be behind any other part of France in art and science; and that a province which has produced the two greatest French composers of modern times, Boieldieu and Auber (the latter from Caen) might in music give the *ton* to France, as formerly, in its *trouvers* and in Basselin, it opened a new career in art to the French, and as at the present day it sets a pattern to the whole kingdom by its efforts to popularise music.

CHAPTER XXI.

Commerce; its decline at Caen—Flourishing State of Agriculture—Importance of the Apple-tree—Society of Agriculture—Introduction of Lammas Wheat—Cattle-breeding—Prince Polignac's Merino Flocks—Mismanagement of Horses—Influence of Horse-jobbing—Manners and Customs of the People—Celebration of Twelfth Day—Easter—St. John's Eve—Emigration of Labourers; its pernicious influence.

CAEN was formerly one of the most flourishing commercial towns of Normandy. The overflowing of the Orne, which once permitted the larger trading vessels to come up to the port of Caen, whereas those of middling size only can now proceed so far, and even this passage is liable to many impediments, is one of the causes of the gradual decrease of the commerce of Caen. For this reason, the citizens have, for a century past, been proposing a canal system for the Orne, and it is surprising that the only result has hitherto been occasional attempts, which have soon been abandoned again. But the principal cause of the decline of the commerce of Caen lies deeper than in the obstructions thrown in its way by the river. Since Caen has ceased to be one of the capitals of an independent

province, since the revocation of the edict of Nantes drove away most of its merchants and manufacturers, and especially since the foundation of Havre, commerce must necessarily retire from Caen, and a canal to the sea would make little alteration.

The increased activity consequent on the revolution of 1830 seems to have given more life, for a time, to the commerce of Caen; for, whereas in 1825 only 769 vessels entered the port, in 1832 their number amounted to 868 French and 73 foreign, and in 1833 to 919 French and 100 foreign; but it then sunk again to the previous average, and a still greater diminution is expected. But, as trade declines, agriculture and cattle-breeding are improving in the environs of Caen and all Lower Normandy in general. In the valleys of the Touque, Dive, and Aure, there are the finest meadows in all France, and the horned cattle of these parts are celebrated far and near; while the cheese of Mignat, Livardt, and Pont l'Evêque, and the butter of Isigny, belong to the delicacies of the capital. The chalky soil of Lisieux, Falaise, Bayeux, and Caen, produces abundant crops of excellent corn; and in the western hilly parts of Falaise, in the arrondissement of Vire, where formerly buckwheat, rye, barley, and oats alone were scantily cultivated, you now see the richest artificial meadows, the most luxuriant corn-fields, and very rarely a waste piece of ground. Throughout the whole province, fruit is largely cultivated, and it produces great quantities of cider and spirituous liquors.

The apple-tree, which seems to have been brought from Spain, at the time when the kings of Navarre resided in general in Normandy—the word *cidre* at least is the Spanish *cidra*—is the breadfruit tree of Normandy; and it is no wonder that the Norman speaks of this tree with a filial affection and veneration, and calls it, with Bernardin de St. Pierre, "l'arbre de mon pays." In the Annais of the Society of Agriculture and Commerce, I have read a formal panegyric on this tree, in which the kindly disposition of the Norman extends itself to Nature. That, whether in its spring or summer, autumn or winter dress, it is an ornament to the country, may readily be conceived, but that its fruit fills store-room, cellar, and kitchen, that it feeds man and beast, and finally serves for manure, that, in short, it is all in all, can be seen in Normandy only. The apples which are not consumed as such, or exported, are pressed and yield cider, the wine of the province. Such as are not fit for cider serve for making brandy or vinegar. The pomace, or pulp, from which the juice has been pressed, supplies fodder for cattle: mixed with vegetable mould, it forms a capital manure for poor land; and in districts where wood is scarce, this substance is dried and used in the following year for fuel. Thus it is easy to account for the affection of the Norman for "the tree of his country," even when not clad in its spring livery—the most beautiful holiday dress in which I ever saw any land salute the young sun and the "maiden of another clime."

The Caen Society of Agriculture and Commerce

contributes not a little to the flourishing state of agriculture. It is owing to this institution that English wheat (lammas, red wheat) which ripens earlier, is much more productive, and requires less time and trouble in its cultivation than ordinary wheat, has extended beyond the limits of the province, and is spreading farther and farther in France. The circumstances of its introduction into Normandy are interesting. An Englishman, named Weathercroft, who emigrated on account of his opinions, settled at Caen, and had some seed wheat brought over from his own country. Among the crop, in the following year, were two ears of lammas wheat, and these two ears were the Adam and Eve of an innumerable posterity now spread over almost all France, and which threatens to exterminate the ordinary kind of wheat. It was in 1797 that these two ears were gathered. If France has lost millions through the war with England, perhaps these two grains of corn, sent accidentally from that country, have made ample amends for the mischief.

The Society of Agriculture has moreover the merit of having instituted prizes not only for the best productions of the soil, but also for labourers. I am not aware that in this point the example of the English Agricultural Societies has been adopted in any other part of France. This kind of competition might be extended to every branch of manufactures and arts. The idea is as old as history, and gave rise some thousand years ago to the

Olympic games. If a Greek were to come to life, and to witness our popular games and festivities, he would lie down again in his grave without regret.

Cattle-breeding is in a flourishing state in the whole of Lower Normandy. It is well known that Prince Polignac took particular pains to introduce the breed of merinos into Normandy, and that in 1827 he had no fewer than 16,000 sheep of that breed in the province; but it is equally well known that, as Polignac could not turn this trade to account, all France was forced to assist him to bear the expence of carrying it on, since the government imposed in his favour a higher duty on the importation of wool, and thus kept him on his legs. Polignac afterwards became minister, and seems while in office to have kept an eye upon his sheep; but a few unruly rams upset the whole ministerial sheep-breeding speculation.

The Agricultural Society of Caen has instituted prizes also for the best horses and horned cattle, and thus contributed to the improvement of the breeds. But the nature of the country itself incites the inhabitants to this pursuit, and the Normans have long been celebrated for the skill with which they carry it on. Of late years, however, the horses, in particular of Caen and the environs, have lost somewhat of their old repute. This is owing to the way in which they are reared; and, as the Agricultural Society has publicly explained the cause, it is to be hoped that the evil will be remedied. The young horses in the neighbourhood of

Caen are in general ill fed and kept to hard work. At eighteen months or two years old, they are employed without mercy, like older animals, in the operations of farming, and worked till three and a half in a way that cannot but be injurious to them. In order to sell them to advantage in the nearest market, the owners then shut them up for one hundred days in warm and dark stables, cover them with woollen cloths, and give them no exercise. During the first fifteen or twenty days of this confinement, they are allowed very little food; but after that they are supplied with as much oats, barley, horse-beans, barley-meal, and Swedish turnips as they can possibly eat, just as if they were fattening for the butcher. To obviate the consequences of want of exercise, frequent bleeding is resorted to. This treatment renders the animal fat and plump, and gives him a glossy skin; but at the same time duly prepares him for all sorts of diseases; and numbers of the finest looking horses, sold after their release—the term used is *affranchir*—in the market of Caen, soon disappoint the expectations formed from their brilliant appearance.

Horse-jobbing seems also to have exercised a moral influence on the inhabitants of Caen and the environs. They have the reputation of being so litigious that you cannot do any business whatever without writings, signed, sealed, and duly attested by the authorities, unless you would like to have a little suit into the bargain, and horse-dealing transactions may certainly tend to strengthen this pro-

pensity in a particular manner, on account of the tricks and contradictions to which they give rise. But the real moral ground of the fondness of the Normans for litigation is of a different kind: I have adverted to it elsewhere.

The Norman is more attached than the inhabitant of any other province of France, excepting, perhaps, the Alsatian, to his ancient manners and customs; and some of these in Caen and the environs, which, though they are disappearing more and more in the towns, are repeated from year to year in the country, may be traced back without much trouble to the times of Roman or Saxon paganism. The Norman, like the German, is in general not content to take the festival as a festival. He strives to give it a tincture of the wonderful, the spectral. He has a feeling of the presence of a higher power; and his understanding does not allow him to recognize in its operations and effects the great Spirit which rules all Nature. Ignorance does not lead necessarily to superstition; for there are many ignorant persons who have shaken off superstition at the same time with faith. Something more is requisite—a living, a creative imagination, and a mind open to external impressions. Superstition is poetry; and a people that is superstitious has hopes that some day, when superstition is transformed not into unbelief but into belief, of producing poetic creations. Malherbe, Corneille, Bernardin de St.

Pierre, Delavigne, and many others who have celebrated Normandy as their native land, have owed perhaps more to this national quality of the Norman than they were themselves aware of.

In Caen, and still more in its environs, Epiphany, Twelfth Day, is a festival of the poor. Every family has its cake called "le gateau des rois." It is cut into one more than as many pieces as there are members in the family; to each, present or absent, a share is allotted, and the supernumerary portion is "la part du bon Dieu"—the share of the good God. After the cake is cut up, one of the children creeps under the table, and the father asks, "Who is this piece for?" and the child answers for such or such a one, or for "le bon Dieu." Each takes his piece, and whoever chances to get a bean that has been baked in the cake is the king of the festival. The share of the absent is reserved for them; it is carefully put away, and serves as a barometer of the health of the distant owner. If he is well, it takes no injury; if he is ill, it contracts a little mould; and if he dies, it becomes quite spoiled. The beggars from all the country round soon appear; and in an ancient song, accompanied with wretched music, they address themselves to the king of the house, soliciting "la part du bon dieu." The song, hymn, or whatever it may be called, is as follows:

Bon soir toute la compagnie d'cette maison:
Dieu vous envoie bonne année et des biens à foison!
Nous sommes de pays étrangers venus en ce lieu
Pour vous faire la demande de la part à Dieu.

In this simple custom there is so much feeling, so much that is childlike, that it suffices of itself to characterise a people who could preserve it during the storms of recent times.

At Easter, the same scene is repeated in a different form.

On Easter Sunday evening, or Easter Monday morning, the environs of Caen resound on all sides with the music of numerous bands. They go from door to door, and sing an old hymn: a couple of stanzas of which I subjoin:—

Séchez les larmes de vos yeux,
Le roi de la terre et des cieux,
Est ressuscité glorieux.
Alleluja!

Donnez quelque chose au chanteur,
Qui chant les louanges du seigneur.
Un jour viendra
Dieu vous l'rendra.
Alleluja!

It is rarely that this appeal has not the effect of obtaining for the singer a few eggs or pieces of money. But if the person addressed is himself poor, he replies with this pleasantry:—

Pauvre chanteur, t'es mal venu,
Not' poul' n'a pas encor pondu.
Demain viendra,
Not' cat (chat) pondra.
Alleluja!

The beggars then go farther, pocketing the joke.

On St. John's eve, you see in the environs of Caen bonfires blazing on every hill, and lads and lasses dancing around them. The learned assert

that this festival derives its origin from Roman paganism, and that it was in reality a festival of Ceres, when the husbandmen ran through the fields with burning firebrands to represent the search after Proserpine, and that this was transformed into a Christian festival, at which the minister of St. John's church has a right to kindle the first bonfire.

Another festival seems to be derived from the Saxons. On Christmas eve the children light torches of fir, and hail the new-born Christ with dancing and singing. It is known that among the ancient Saxons the year began with this day, and that new year's night was celebrated by them in the same manner. Superstition gave a particular import to these torch-dances. The torches are sprinkled with holy water, kept the whole year, and lighted whenever it thunders, in order to protect the house from the lightning. The same custom is met with along the Rhine.

Formerly popular festivals of this kind were more frequent, and the clergy themselves encouraged these customs, and especially the carnival, which is so widely diffused, after they had borrowed them from the pagan priests.

It is lamentable to see how seldom such customs and festivals, which, while they pay homage to absurdity, nevertheless have their fair side tending to elevate the mind, can be attacked without destroying the sound kernel along with the rotten fruit. But such is man: when he would drive away the fly, he fetches, like the bear in the fable, a huge

stone, and dashes in pieces, not only the insect, but also the head from which he means to scare it. The philosophers of the eighteenth and their apes in the nineteenth century acted and act, for the most part, very like the bear in the fable.

Caen and the environs were formerly very wealthy, and the country is in consequence extremely populous. The decline of trade has necessarily had an injurious influence there; hence there is a great number of idle hands. But the Norman is too spirited to put up quietly with his distress; and as he combines in himself, like his German ancestors, the two opposite sentiments, fondness for emigration and love of country, he soon resolves to quit his native land, and to seek elsewhere what he cannot find at home. Thousands of labourers from Caen and the vicinity, commonly called *tailleurs de pierres*, because, while they are at home, they are mostly employed in the stone-quarries, leave the country in spring, work in Havre, Cherbourg, and Paris, till towards autumn, and then return to get in the harvest, and to pass the winter at home. The women, during the absence of their husbands, earn their bread by lace-making.

This emigration from the environs of Caen is of incalculable consequence for all Lower Normandy, and begins already to show its fruit. I am thoroughly convinced that marriage, a family, are the strongest defences of morality, and wherever I have been I have found proofs of the truth of this opinion. This partial migration releases husband

and wife for six or eight months from the bonds of matrimony. The man seeks and finds abroad compensation for his privations, and the woman remains at home without a protector. This circumstance alone must have very great influence. The men, moreover, bring back from their travels a number of books, and in general such only as aggravate the evil, without tending to enlighten—those stupid novels of Jules Janin's school or manufactory, those luscious stories of love-intrigues. In winter evenings the females, married and single, with their implements, meet sometimes in one house, sometimes in another, where one of the men reads a novel of this kind, and thus sows the seed which he has brought with him from the capital. Of course, as soon as the men are gone again, the women strive to act the novel to which they have been listening. Hence, such a corruption of manners, such a moral depravity, pervade this class of people as are not to be found in any other part of Normandy, and as perhaps cannot be checked but by the formation of institutions in the country itself for the employment of the idle hands—if, however, it be possible to exterminate an evil that grows rank as weeds upon a neglected soil. Distress is the nurse of vice and crime, and he only is a preacher of worth and morality who strives to find a permanent remedy for it. But how is it to be remedied? This is the question, around which at the present day the world and history revolve as round their axes; and it is a most important point

that the pilots who are at the helm of states have been compelled to ask this question. The future must decide whether railroads will afford a remedy, whether the material part of the question alone needs an answer, or whether men must become men,'' and subjects citizens, before the most complete material amendment can produce a permanent effect.

CHAPTER XXII.

Bayeux—The Cathedral—Spirit and Moral State of the Clergy—Ancient Importance of the Town—Its present Trade—Bayeux Tapestry—Popular Superstitions; German Origin of some of them encouraged by the Clergy—Fetiches—Tradition of St. Loup—The Parson's Conjuring-Book—The Fairy of Argouges—Patois of the People of the Bessin—Their expressive names for natural Objects—Proverbs illustrative of their Character—Popular Song—Miraculous Cures—Belief in Witchcraft.

THE road from Caen to Bayeux runs through rich corn-fields, varying with luxuriant meadows, adorned with the apple-tree, which is never wanting in Normandy. Here and there rise small hills, rarely covered with wood, so that you may overlook the country for a considerable distance, with its Norman-Gothic church-steeples and its neat villages. In spring you may fancy that you are riding through a continued series of pleasure-grounds.

At length the beautiful cathedral of Bayeux appears in view. It is very ancient, and of course the more remarkable for the amateur. It was formerly very rich, and a list of its treasures, made in 1476, *va presque à l'infini*, according to the expression of a Norman historian. These treasures have, it is true, disappeared; the Huguenots robbed the church of

some of them, and the Revolution dispersed the rest; and this ecclesiastical wealth is doing at this day more wonders among the people than ever did relic in the hand of a priest. This, however, has not had the effect of extirpating that cancer which prevails in all countries governed by the clergy—I mean beggary—for on the road from Caen to Bayeux our charity was solicited by at least a dozen boys and old men.

Bayeux seems to have been one of the towns which, after the immigration of the Normans, was inhabited exclusively by them, and where they kept themselves longest unmixed with the French. William Longsword, at least, said, concerning the education of his son Richard, to Boton, earl of the Bessin, "If I have him brought up at Rouen, he will not learn Danish, for nobody here speaks that language. But I wish to see him educated in such a manner as to learn to speak Danish. Here they speak nothing but Romane: but at Bayeux most of the inhabitants can talk Danish only. Therefore it is my wish, Sir Boton, that he should reside with you, and that you should take upon you the care of hs education."*

* Se a Roeme le faz garder
E norir gaires lungiment,
Il ne sara parler neient
Daneis, car nul nel i parole.
Si voil kil seit a tell escole
Ke as daneis sace parler.
Se ne soient neient forz romane
Mez a Bayues parler se daneis non,

Bayeux was and still is the see of a bishop: most of the clergy resident there, who could not forgive the Revolution for having sent out the golden apostles into the world to preach, were always stanch partisans of the Bourbons, and at the present day are in general Carlists. The majority of the inhabitants of Bayeux, who live in a great measure by the clergy, and are under their influence, sing Amen whenever their reverences pronounce a blessing or a curse.

A few days after my arrival at Bayeux, a festival

Et pur ce sire quens Boton
Voil ke vos l'aiez ensemble ad vos
Et de li enseigner curios.
Le Roman de Rou.

Dudo, p. 112, says: "Quoniam quidem Rothomagensis civitas romana potius quam dacisca utitur eloquentia, et Bajocacensis fruitur frequentius dacisca lingua quam romana." This passage is probably the original source of the above anecdote. We see from it that the writer of the romance goes farther than the chronicler, when he says that nobody in Rouen spoke Danish, while the latter merely asserts that the Romane language was more common there. Perhaps this passage of the chronicle, which may be founded on a fact—the Danish language at Bayeux and the education of Richard in that town for the purpose of learning Danish—has a different meaning. The Norman settlers consisted of Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, and even Saxons. Rollo was a Norwegian, and it is to be presumed that the Norwegians collected around him in the greatest number. The Danes, on the other hand, appear to have settled with their leader at Bayeux, and to have been most numerous there. Hence it was that William Longsword sent his son thither to learn Danish. But it is contrary to the nature of things to assume that, twenty years after the establishment of the Normans in Rouen, their principal seat, none of them could speak the Norman language.

was held there, of which I shall say a few words, for after that I need say no more concerning the moral state of the clergy in that city. The new bishop of Flours was consecrated at Bayeux by the bishop of that place. Several other bishops, the clergy from the whole adjacent country, and a great concourse of people, had been drawn to Bayeux by this solemnity. The church was sumptuously decorated and parted off into several divisions. Here is the ticket of the prices of admittance :—

Avant-Scene. Loges reservées . .	10 Francs.
1ères Galeries	5 —
Couloirs du Jube	5 —
2des Loges, chapelles laterales . .	2 —
3mes Loges	50 cent.

The Caen paper, le Pilote, contained next day the following paragraph : " In the evening, the manager of the theâtre had likewise reason to be satisfied with his receipts. The places were not so dear, it is true, but the house was full ; and we observed in the first boxes the same faces and the same dresses as we had remarked in the morning in the galleries of the cathedral."

This, methinks, is quite sufficient !

It is pretty certain that Bayeux was formerly one of the first towns of Lower Normandy ; and this we are authorised to assume, indeed, by the circumstance of its having been chosen for an episcopal see : at present it is little more than a village. Agriculture and cattle-breeding are the principal occupations of the inhabitants. The trade in butter is con-

siderable: the town sends annually about 120,000 pounds weight in small pots to Paris, and is said to make besides 5000 pounds of ordinary butter per week. A great number of the inhabitants, who amount to 3000, are engaged in making blonde; and the neighbouring chalk-hills furnish a profitable source of subsistence.

The greatest curiosity of the town, a real mine for the antiquary, is the celebrated Bayeux tapestry. It represents the conquest of England, and is said to have been wrought under the direction of Matilda, consort of William the Conqueror. This point, however, is strongly disputed: and many are the pens that have been engaged in defending or attacking this notion. If it is really so ancient as it is considered, and as many striking arguments seem to prove it to be, it is of high importance with regard to the history of the conquest, or at least to the dress and manners of the times. It is well known that an envoy of Harold's, after he had seen the Normans, came back and said that William had landed with an army of priests; and the reporter was supposed to have been really astonished at the great number of priests in William's army. The tapestry gives a different interpretation to the words of the messenger, for there the Normans are seen with the back of the head shorn, and shaven upper lip, which gave them the appearance of tonsured priests. This fashion, however, seems to have been soon abandoned, for half a century later complaints were made even at Rome of the luxuriant heads of

hair of the Norman priests, a circumstance which speaks indirectly in favour of the antiquity of the tapestry. In later times this ancient work was called to play a part which its royal author never dreamt of. When Bonaparte designed to invade England, he sent this tapestry upon its travels, and caused it to be exhibited in Rouen and Paris, to afford ocular demonstration that it was a mere trifle to conquer a nation which eight hundred years ago was not able to withstand the sovereign of Normandy alone. How little are great men very often!

But this is a subject which I had no intention to discuss. An inhabitant of Bayeux, M. Pluquet, has produced a little work of a class of which there are unluckily very few in France.* As the particulars which he relates concerning Bayeux and its environs mostly apply, with mere local alterations, to the whole of Lower Normandy, I shall make no apology for introducing here some of the results of his book.

The source of popular tales, of ghost stories, is a lively imagination, which is not content to take the external phenomenon, but wants to know, seeks, and creates, the cause of it. Now poetry, if the people are really poetical, decks out this wonderful cause of the natural phenomenon with the riches of a fertile imagination; and if they, like most of the tribes of German origin, look upon Nature with friendly eye, that too becomes instinct with life; and the tree, the

* "Contes Populaires, Prèjugés, Patois, et Proverbes de l'Arondissement de Bayeux. Rouen, 1834."

spring, the hill, the river, are transformed into living beings, that look down from the other world upon this of which we are denizens.

A German, if he were to mingle with the people of Normandy, and take the trouble to study their notions, sentiments, and manners, would soon find himself at home. He would there meet with the same stories which at once terrified and delighted him in childhood. The frightful werewolf, whose very name, *loup-garou* (warou, warwou, warwolf), is German, is an old acquaintance; and he is equally familiar with the bone-gnawer, *rongeur d'os*, a man metamorphosed into a dog, dragging chains along the streets and picking up bones by the way. The Edda makes mention of men thus transformed by evil spirits into wolves or dogs

The German origin of these two imaginary beings is undeniable: neither can it be doubted that, if the Gauls had here and there a little witch-story of their own, they were far surpassed by the Germans in their fondness for the wonderful, in their poetry of witchcraft, fairies, and goblins; and if at the present day the Normans can keep pace with the German peasants, it is the German blood circulating in their veins that they have to thank for it.

The genuine German intuition of Nature, which is reflected in the language, and which infuses a new and wonderful life into the already so beautiful life of rivers, hills, trees, and meadows, has likewise been transmitted to the Normans. Everybody has seen in the meadows large circles where the grass is

withered and as if burned. The Norman calls these, as the English do, fairy-rings, *cercles des fées*, and attributes them to the same cause as was assigned to them by the rural population of Britain. If he hears a wolf howling at night, he knows that a troop of Lubins is galloping to the churchyard to dig up the dead, and that their leader is a huge black Lubin, who, when he sees a man approaching, cries, "Robert est mort! Robert est mort!" on which signal the whole troop scamper off.

This natural disposition of the Normans was encouraged and developed by the belief in the miracles of Christianity, and by the solicitude of the priests to exhibit themselves and their predecessors in a higher light; and if the belief in witches has maintained its ground for thousands of years, and it still exists in mass in France, and especially in Normandy, the clergy are more to blame for this than any thing else.

The anxiety of the clergy to fall in with the popular notions is manifested in Normandy in the wells and springs, which are mostly under the protection of a saint who has dispossessed some nymph of her right, and now performs the most miraculous cures, as she did before him. Should any one consider my remark concerning the influence of the clergy on the belief in witches as too severe, let him recollect that, one or two hundred years ago, the clergy burned witches without ceremony, or rather with great ceremony and pomp. So long as the memory of these executions lives among the people,

so long the belief in witches will not be exterminated. In Normandy that belief is still the order of the day; and every ailing cow, every bad crop, every thunder-storm, are the consequences of some spell, which none but a witch or wizard can dissolve. The spirits which rise from the grave, to beseech their friends and relatives to redeem them from purgatory, are still fresh in the memory of the Normans. Another catholic dogma howls at night in Normandy, through town and country, in the form of *fétiches*; for these *fétiches*, white as snow, and perfectly innocent, but extremely shy, since they instantly vanish if you attempt to lay hold of them, are no other than infants who have died unbaptized, and whose spirits, according to the catholic doctrine, float between heaven and hell, and know not what is to become of them, because they are not provided with the passport—a place in the baptismal register.

One of these supernatural stories current in the environs of Bayeux was to a certainty invented by the clergy themselves. It is called by the people "l'histoire de la bête de St. Loup." A furious wolf did a great deal of mischief, at the time of the bishop St. Loup, in the suburbs of Bayeux and the surrounding villages. The bishop resolved to attack the beast himself: accordingly, he sought the ferocious animal, and, having made a rope of his stole, threw it about the wolf's neck, and dragged him by it to the water and drowned him. From that time, in order to perpetuate the remembrance of the deed, the wolf, *la bête de St. Loup*, haunted

Bayeux, and prowled howling about the church of St. Loup. While he continued to do so, nobody could doubt the miracle; and even now that he has ceased to visit the town, very few sheep of the christian flock of Bayeux doubt the fact, for, is not a representation of it, hewn in stone, to be seen at the church?

Some of the stories current in the environs of Bayeux are so poetical and so humorous as to be worth recording. Göthe must have met with one of them somewhere or other. At Bayeux it is called *le grimoire du curé*—the parson's conjuring book—and it is thus related by the aged crone to her grandchildren: "There was once a parson near Bayeux, who had a mighty conjuring book, by means of which he could ban all sorts of spirits, both good and evil. One day, being called away suddenly to a sick person, he left his conjuring book upon the table. The bell-ringer chanced to come in, saw the book, peeped into it, and was overjoyed to find that it was the parson's wonderful book. He began to read, and, to try its power, he pronounced the form for calling up the devil, and the fiend instantly made his appearance. But the devil looked so hideous, that the bell-ringer, ready to faint with fright, dropped the book and made the sign of the cross. As he had called the devil himself, the cross had no power, but only served to enrage old Beelzebub. So he went up to the bell-ringer and asked: 'What do you want with me, impudent scoundrel?' The bell-ringer, more terri-

fied than before, had only just strength enough to get up for the purpose of running away. But the devil, seeing clearly that the man did not know how to lay him, seized him by the hair, lifted him up, and was just going to fly away with him, when luckily the parson came in and released the poor fellow from the clutches of the devil. The bell-ringer must have died of the fright, if the parson had not made him take a miraculous remedy. From that time he always locked up his conjuring book most carefully, and the bell-ringer never felt any desire to peep into it again.—So mind and never touch any conjuring book as long as you live.'

The devil seems in general to have been very submissive to the clergy, and the Norman proverb accordingly says:

Prêtres et bergers
Sont sorciers.

Another story related in Bayeux is likewise founded on the skill of the priests in the black art; for, according to it, Jean Patye, canon of Bayeux, once travelled all the way to Rome on the devil's shoulders, to sing matins, as a canon of Bayeux was bound to do every year on a certain day, and was back again in the church at Bayeux in an hour.

Another popular tale about the fairy of Argouges is not quite so frightful, and much more poetic and dramatic.

A knight of Argouges, near Bayeux, had in his peregrinations become acquainted with a fairy of

wonderful beauty and fallen deeply in love with her, as she had with him. From this time, the knight was the happiest man in the world, for the fairy conferred on him the treasures of the mountains and of the sea, and gave him victory whenever he fought; so with her aid he once conquered a prodigious giant, who had never before met with his match. At length his love impelled the knight to offer his hand to the fairy, who had long possessed his heart. At first, she would not consent, but when he tried to persuade her, she said that men were inconstant, and that, besides, she as a fairy was immortal, while the knight was mortal, and that the very idea of being some time or other parted from her beloved husband would be too painful to her. And the knight made answer: "Though I am mortal, my love shall never die. Let me not be punished because I am only man, for my love to thee is more than human." And the fairy replied: "Well, I will consent, but upon one condition, death alone can and shall part us; and that we may not think of parting, we must forget death. If thou wouldst have me marry thee, the word *death* must never pass thy lips." But the knight said: "The condition is so easy to fulfil that it is scarcely worth while to propose it." The fairy answered: "We shall see: the moment thou utterest that word, I shall leave thee and be wretched."

For many years they lived together as if they were in heaven; but misunderstandings at last arose,

for the knight wished for a son, and it was not in the fairy's power to give him one. So one day they were invited to an entertainment, and the fairy looked out her finest clothes and her most splendid jewels. The knight had to wait down stairs for her, and she was a long, very long time dressing. Twice he sent up his page to the lady, with a request that she would make haste. And just as he was going to send the boy up for the third time, down came the fairy in all her glory. The knight angrily exclaimed: "Fair lady! be so good as to fetch death, for you are very slow about your work."

Scarcely had he pronounced the fatal word, when the fairy turned pale, looked at him once more with her large bright eye, in which a tear glistened, and vanished. Not till then was the knight of Argouges aware of what he had done and what he had lost. That very hour he fell sick, and every night the fairy flew around the pinnacles of his castle, crying with plaintive voice, "Death! death!" till at length the knight died. But the fairy is still living, as any one may convince himself, if he will go at midnight to the old castle, where he may hear her uttering lamentations and the parting cry of: "Death! death!"

I must confess that I have scarcely ever heard a finer fairy tale. If you inquire its origin, the antiquaries reply, that a knight, Robert d'Argouges, did really vanquish a gigantic German; that in the arms of these knights there was a representation of Faith, with their battle-cry, *la foi—la fé* in the

provincial dialect; and that out of this *la fé* the people made the story of the fairy. Thus it is that if but a spark falls upon the imagination of a really poetic people, it is sure to take fire. . Such a people has a future, and it is melancholy to see how a doctrine that knows nothing but interest, in order to get rid of an excrescence, gnaws at the root and strives to bring down the tree. Heaven grant that the reign of this doctrine may not last long enough to lead to the dreary abyss which is yawning to receive it!

The language is the people. The patois of the Bessin, the country round Bayeux, is a fresh proof of this. It is the shibboleth of the Normans of this district, and if history should ever be utterly forgotten, the patois alone would indicate the country from which those who speak it derive their origin. A great number of words might be cited, which are undoubtedly of German extraction.

But what, without this material affinity, would prove a kindred turn of mind, is the way in which the people of Bessin seize Nature, in which, not content with the most inexpressive names given by the French language to flowers and animals, they invent new, picturesque, and strongly characteristic designations. Amourette des champs (common chamomile), amourette des près (brisa media, quaking grass), bec de corbeau (ranunculus arvensis), chemise de la bonne vierge (lady's smock, bindweed), crêve-chien (viburnum lantana), grasse-poulette (chenopodium album, goose-foot), lait de pie

(euphorbia sylvestris), langue de brebis (ranunculus flammula), langue de bec (carex glauca), mouches d'eau (geris paludosa), pain de crapaud (champion commune), pas de lion (ranunculus repens), pate d'oie (heracleum sphondylium, cow-parsnip), queue de coq (colium multiflorum), queue de renard (armaranthus rubens), reveil-matin (rumex sanguineus), tête de chat and tête de loup (species of the scabius), tetin de souris (sedum minus), and many more, show with how keen an eye the peasant scrutinizes Nature, and gives flowers names, which for him have a signification. The French language, on the other hand, is as cold in this respect as most of the French are in the observation of Nature.

I am no botanist, and therefore cannot tell whether the French language has any proper names for those flowers and herbs to which Latin appellations are annexed in the above list, but I should rather suppose not; because the author of the work in which I have met with them seems not to be acquainted with them, and also because the French language frequently passes by flowers, as it does the beautiful phenomena of nature in general, without deigning to give them a name, whereas on the useful it bestows the minutest attention. The Norman, on the other hand, shows in his expressive designations of flowers that he looks at Nature with the eye of a friend, that he is more familiar with her than the Frenchman, and that he calls her works by names which are dear, and, above all, intelligible to him.

In regard to the denominations of animals, this rustic language is just as plastic, as full of life, as rich in allusions, which prove that the people who speak it must have observed, thought, and felt, when they invented those names. It is natural that, with this gift of observation, we should meet with names for phenomena for which the French language has omitted to furnish special designations. Thus the French, like the English language, has no particular term for that species of lightning which is not accompanied by thunder, and which the Germans call *Wetterleuchten*. The peasant of the Bessin, feeling this deficiency, terms that sort of lightning *calin*.

I have extracted these words from a very incomplete vocabulary in the little work of M. Pluquet, and am certain that a closer study of this popular idiom would furnish occasion for far more comprehensive comparisons and remarks. The above, however, are sufficient to show that the Norman in general views Nature rather with German than with French eyes.

Proverbs present a farther medium for studying a people and its character. I am convinced that a consideration and comparison of all the proverbs common among the people of one country with those of another would accurately mark the characteristic differences of both. They are the living and breathing philosophy, politics, and experience of a people.

The proverbs current among the inhabitants o Lower Normandy attest, like their language, a con-

stant observation of Nature, in order to learn her secrets from her. The Bessinois is a farmer, and he has a proverbial farmer's calendar of his own:—

Pluie de Fevrier
Vaut jus de fumier.

Fevrier qui donne neige
Bel été nous plége (pledges, promises.)

Mars martille
Avril coutille.

Avril le doux
Quand il se fache le pis de tout.

Froid mai et chaud juin
Donnent pain et vin.

En juignet (juillet)
La faucille au poignet.

But in his calendar the Norman pays more attention to festivals, for he is very religious.

A Noel au balcon,
A Pacques au tisson.

A Noel les moucherons,
A Pacques les glaçons.

Le propre jour de rameaux
Sème oignon et porceau.

Pacques pluvieux
An fromenteux.

Apres Pacques et les Rogations,
Ti des prêtres et d'oignons.

A la St. Barnabé
La faux au pré.

Passe la St. Clement
Ne sème plus le froment.

A la St. George
Sème ton orge.

A la St. Laurent
La faucille au froment.

A la St. Sacrement
L'epi est au froment.

A la St. Urbain
Le froment port grain.

A la St. Catherine
Tout bois prend racine.

Si le soleil rit le jour St. Eulalie,
Il y aura pommes et cidre à la folie.

Such are the rules of the Bessinois in regard to agriculture. He has reduced his practical philosophy also to proverbs. He is an enemy to all physic and physicians, and therefore says:—

Il faut mieux aller au moulin
Que d'aller au medecin.

And again:—

Qui court après le mière (doctor)
Court après la bière.

His physic is:—

Soupe avant, soupe après,
Fait vivre cent ans près.

Or this:—

Qui mange, feint, et dort,
Ne doit avoir peur de mort.

Mal de tête
Veut dormir au repaitre.

He is fond of his home, and therefore tells you :—

A tout oiseau
Son nid semble beau.

He is a good economist, and says on this point :—

Petit à petit
L'oiseau fait son nid.

And further :—

Boudoir et kaabans (pleasures and fine clothes)
Ne font pas riches gens.

" Il ne faut pas faire vie qui druge (to drudge, work hard) mais vie qui dure." [This is the Yorkshire adage : Take it as you can bide it.] So he is not apt to hurry himself, and thinks :—

Laisser bouillir le mouton.

Still he never thinks of sitting with his hands folded on his lap, for he well knows that

On aide bien à bon Dieu
A faire de bon blé.

He expresses his sense of justice in the following proverb :—

La maison de pillard
Perira tôt ou tard ;

And he is of opinion that the law and the government ought to be strong, for he says :—

Quand la haie est basse,
Tout le monde y passe.

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We also meet with traces of the mistrust of the Norman in the following :—

Fille fiancée
N'est pas mariée.

Une fois vu
Cent fois mécru.

I have already remarked that this mistrust is a consequence of the state of anarchy in which Normandy was so frequently placed by the different invasions, conquests, and civil wars, and a Bessin proverb which says, "S'il y a une bonne soire dans un pairier, c'est pour un cochon," seems to date from the period when oppression and violence had annihilated all law and justice.

All these rhyming proverbs indicate that the Norman has a musical ear. A couple of expressions that are frequently used, "Comme dit la chanson," and "Belle chanson n'en sera pas moins chantée," seem to denote that formerly the Normans were fond of singing. The ancient Norman *trouvers* furnish further evidence of this. I have already shown how, at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Epiphany, people go about in the country round Caen singing and playing. This custom is met with at Bayeux also, and the singers carry lighted torches, and the song sung by them is a proof of the jovial humour of the old Normans.

Couline vaut lolot
Pipe au pommier
Gerbe au boissey.
Mon père bet bien,

Ma mére oco mieux,
Mon père à guichonnée,
Ma mère à coudronnée,
Et mei à terrinée.

Adieu Noë
Il est passé.
Couline vaut lolot,
Gerbe au boissey,
Pipe au pommier
Bieure et lait
Tout à planté.

Taupes et mulots
Sors de mon clos
Ou je te cas les os.
Barbaisioné
Si tu viens dans mon clos
Je te brule la barbe jusqu'aux os.

Adieu Noë
Il est passé;
Noë s'en va
Il viendra.
Pipe au pommier,
Gerbe au boissey,
Bieure et lait
Tout à planté.

It is impossible for any one not acquainted with the *patois* to translate this song. Of the first line, which recurs in the second stanza, I can make nothing. The rest, according to my interpretation, is as follows:—

Couline vaut lolot.
May every apple-tree produce a pipe (of cider),
Every sheaf a bushel (of corn).
My father drinks stoutly,
My mother still better,

My father a *guichonnée* (a large earthenware jug),
My mother a *coudrouée* (another sort of large mug),
And I a terrineful.

Farewell, Christmas!
Christmas is past.
Couline vaut lolot.
A pipe to each apple-tree,
Butter and milk,
All in plenty.

Mole and field-mouse,
Get out of my field,
Or I will break thy bones.
Barbaisioné (an evil spirit),
If thou comest to my field
I'll burn thy beard to the bone.

Farewell to Christmas!
Christmas is going.
It will come again.
A pipe to each apple-tree,
A bushel to each sheaf.
Butter and milk
All in plenty.

Antiquaries are of opinion that this song, and the whole ceremony, which consists in going through the fields with burning torches to render them more fertile, must be referred to the times of the Druids, or some other paganism. It certainly looks heathenish enough, and I shall therefore not contradict them. At any rate, according to this hypothesis, it is a proof how such popular songs are preserved for thousands of years; and it is unpardonable in antiquaries to bestow, as most of them do, their time and pains on a stone or a coin,

which after all is not of half so much importance as a song of this kind, when one is capable of duly appreciating it, and can compare it with those of other times and other nations. But this is a thing that has very seldom been thought of.

Good humour, an eye for the beauties of Nature, and sound common sense, are expressed in the proverbs that I have quoted. In the song and its object, on the other hand, is manifested a belief in the wonderful, and thus we are met by that contrast between sound sense and superstition which we have such frequent opportunity to remark in every country. When we hear those homely proverbs in which the Norman proclaims his dislike of the physician and the apothecary, in which he leaves the cure of diseases to the power of Nature, we are the more struck to find in almost the whole of Normandy the peasant attributing every illness to witchcraft, and sending for the conjuror to cure his family or his cattle. From time to time cases of this kind come before the courts, but it is not one in a hundred that has this issue. In Normandy it is only in the larger towns that the revolution has eradicated these stupid notions, and there but partially. I recollect having heard in Havre of the miraculous cures performed by a certain family upon persons bitten by mad dogs; and the narrators believed them as firmly as the gospel. In Bayeux there is a family which cures wens, as the kings of France formerly did, and as the British sovereigns cured the king's evil, by the

mere touch, and likewise the *carreau*, an obstruction of the mesentery, to which children are much subject.

In the Bessin the art of healing by miraculous means requires a particular study, and has its own materia medica. Fever is cured by putting a living spider in a nutshell and keeping it for nine days in the bosom. Whoever has too great an aversion to the insect to employ this remedy may repeat the following form: "Au nom du Saint Euxepère et de Sainte Honorine, arrière fièvre d'avant, fièvre d'arrière, fièvre printannière, fièvre quartaine, ago, superago, consummatum est." To this must be added three paternosters and three Ave Marias. Probatum est. Should this fail to afford relief, the formula is written upon parchment which has never before been used, and fastened to the left hand, where it is left for nine days, when the patient is certain to be cured or—dead; for not an herb that grows, not a form that was ever devised, can stay the advance of death.

Individual remedies are of a still more innocent nature, and it would seem as if many of them were invented merely to uphold the proverb which says:—

Qui court après le mière
Court après la bière.

Thus for wounds received from falls a droll remedy is used—rats' dung dissolved in water. Mice fare worse; they are killed and cooked and

given to children to eat, as a cure for the whooping-cough. One would really suppose that some merry wag, taking advantage of the simplicity of the people, had persuaded them to have recourse to these ludicrous remedies with a view to preserve them from such as might be less innocent.

When cattle are taken ill, such cases are sure to be attributed to some witch or wizard. The affair is then more serious, and, be the complaint what it will, recourse is had to the following incantation: "St. John! St. John! St. John of Nicodemus! in the name of St. Elisabeth, I conjure thee that this beast suffer no longer than the blessed Virgin when she bore our Lord Jesus Christ!" Add five paternosters and five Ave Marias, and how can St. John of Nicodemus withstand such a spell, if he has any gallantry!

CHAPTER XXIII.

Falaise—The Castle—Bedchamber of Duke Robert the Magnificent— Prison of Arthur of Bretagne — Popular Song on the Birth of William the Conqueror—Amour of Duke Robert with Harlotte, a Tanner's Daughter — House reputed to have been the Dwelling of the Conqueror—Heroism of Women of Falaise — Extraordinary Execution — Messrs. Galleron and Travers; their efforts for the encouragement of agriculture and industry, and for diffusing popular instruction—Society formed for that purpose—Elementary Publications issued by it—State of the Schools—System of the French Government in regard to public instruction.

In less than six hours you are carried from the grave of William the Conqueror to the spot on which his cradle stood. In travelling from the latter of these to the former, the tanner's bold grandson trod upon heaps of slain, and, wherever he set foot, the ground reeked with blood. The god of history has engraved upon his tomb-stone lessons that grin at us as if in scorn of the greatness of a great conqueror. Let us see whether the ruins of the castle that contained his cradle have their language also.

Falaise is now a country town of ten or eleven thousand inhabitants, who subsist partly by agri-

culture, partly by manufactures. The town is romantically situated on the side of a hill; the houses are old-fashioned, some of them built of wood and plaster. The streets are enlivened by clear, cool streams of water, without which they would look extremely dull and dismal.

My first inquiry, on alighting from the diligence, was the way to the castle. On the ground formerly inclosed by the walls of the castle and surrounded by its ruins stands the college of Caen. The noisy sports of the scholars, playing their youthful gambols, while two teachers walked to and fro in earnest conversation, were the welcome with which I was greeted amidst the ruins of the castle. And the violated grave, the broken tomb-stone, in Caen preach not a more impressive lesson than these schoolboys, playing on the spot where William the Conqueror first dreamed of his greatness.

A lofty door, opened by an enormous key, admits you into the inner enclosure of the castle. You then find yourself on the terrace, which may probably have served for tournaments and chivalrous exercises as well as for walking. Between this terrace, the castle, and the castle-wall, there is a kitchen garden.

At the end of the terrace was formerly a tower, now only a breastwork, in which is still to be seen the breach battered by Henry IV., and through which he penetrated into the castle and the town. This spot commands one of the finest views imaginable. Deep in the valley, at the foot of the

castle, lies a meadow surrounded by hills and rocks, the fresh verdure of which forms an extraordinary and most charming contrast with the rugged masses of the *falaise* and castle. Through this meadow winds a sportive stream, heightening the animation of the scene. Behind us is the castle, with its lofty Talbot Tower, and its black walls, gnawed by the tooth of Time; and opposite to this, on the other side of the valley and river, the *falaise*, where hundreds and hundreds of rugged blocks of stone, thrown into the most singular groupes and shapes, form a ruin of a very different kind, and attest a revolution which must have happened thousands of years ago, and in which giants — the powers of Nature — combated for the mastery. Never did I behold in so small a compass—the whole view is scarcely a league in circumference—such striking contrasts brought together; contrasts which tell of the first revolutions of the globe in those masses of rock; of the still life of the first men, the golden age, in that meadow, that river; and of the iron age of our forefathers in that ruin beside us. This view gives us, without stirring a step from the spot, what we esteem ourselves lucky to find singly here and there in our peregrinations. It was long before I could take my eyes off it; and nothing but the impatience of my guide, who could not conceive how any one, close to the castle in which the Conqueror was born, could want to be gazing at the adjacent country, roused me from my reverie.

He then conducted me into the castle itself.

Four massive walls, with several windows and two or three niche-like closets constructed in the walls, are all that remains of the magnificence of Robert *le magnifique*. My guide pointed out the window, from which, according to the popular tradition, Robert first beheld his Harlotte, or Harlette, washing at the stream below. If at that distance he could have discovered and appreciated her beauty, he must indeed have had a pair of hawk's eyes. A nearly contemporary poet gives a more natural account of the matter; but more of that anon. Let us first look over the castle.

On the right of the above-mentioned window is the room in which, also according to popular tradition, William the Conqueror was begotten. If there was a bed in this apartment, as no doubt there was, there could scarcely have been room enough left to turn round; for the chamber of Robert *le magnifique* was not larger than that of the poorest scribbler who lodges in a mansarde. My cicerone next took me to a still smaller contiguous apartment, in which Arthur of Bretagne, nephew of King John, and like him a descendant of the Conqueror's, was confined. Thus, close to the cradle of the conqueror of England, is the prison of his descendant, reminding us that his own blood caused Normandy, his patrimony, to be ravished from his posterity. But this prison teaches us another lesson, namely that, in an age which we often proudly call the age of barbarism, a king could not find an executioner, and was obliged to stain his

own hands with the blood of his victim. John sent orders to his warriors at Falaise to murder Arthur, but they replied that they were soldiers, not executioners. The king, therefore, had his nephew removed to Rouen, and there, with his own hand, as it is believed, plunged a dagger into his heart. The Normans, shocked at so foul a murder, threw off their allegiance to the perpetrator, and thus became subjects of the king of France, as soon as he attacked Normandy in earnest. This circumstance affords a most striking proof of the sense of justice of the Normans.

From Arthur's prison my guide took me to the pinnacles of the tower built by Talbot, where one again enjoys a surprisingly beautiful prospect, embracing in a bird's-eye view the town and the whole surrounding country.

The history of Robert and William the Conqueror, and particularly that of Harlotte, the mother of the latter, is so intimately connected with the ruins of the castle, that it is but natural that it should still live in the memory of the people, and have furnished a theme for songs and traditions. In the first place, here is a song that is still heard occasionally at Falaise.

LA NAISSANCE DE GUILLAUME LE CONQUERANT.

RONDE.

Air.—La boulangère a des écus.

De Guillaume le conquérant
Chantons l'historiette,
Il naquit, cet illustre enfant,
D'une simple amourette.

Le hasard fait souvent les grands. . . .
Vive le fils d'Arlette!
Normands,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!

Fille d'un simple pelletier
Elle etait gentillette
Robert, en galant chevalier,
Vint lui conter fleurette;
L'amour égale tous les rangs,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!
Normands,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!

Falaise dans sa noble tour
Vit entrer la fillette,
Et c'est la que le dieu d'amour
Finit l'histoirette.
Anglais, honorez ces amans,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!
Normands,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!

Guillaume assemble ses guerriers
Au son de la trompette:
L'olive embellit ses lauriers;
La gloire fut complette:
Ah! vivent de tels conquérants,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!
Normands,
Vive le fils d'Arlette!

I have mentioned above that, according to the popular tradition, Robert first espied Harlotte from his window and fell in love with her. An ancient *Poeme* tells the story in a different way. I subjoin a translation of it.*

* The Norman original text of Benoit de St. More is to be found in Frenaye's "Nouvelle Histoire de Normandie," p. 426, *et. seq.* I give the passage relative to Falaise from a French translation introduced into Galleron's "Histoire de Falaise."

"The brave Robert, duke of the Normans, dwelt in Falaise, a very beautiful, healthy, and pleasant place. One of his greatest foibles was his love for a damsel, whose history I will relate.

"One day, when he returned from the chase, he saw her in a little valley, where she, with several daughters of townspeople, was washing linen at a spring. She had her clothes for convenience, and, according to the custom of those who used to wash here, tucked up to below the knee. The day was fine, the weather warm, and her feet and legs displayed such beauty that the transported duke imagined their whiteness shamed snow and lilies, and love instantly took possession of his heart.

"The virgin daughter of a townsman was beautiful and amiable, and had been well and prudently brought up. She was fair, her brow and eyes were fine, her complexion was more delicate than roses and lilies, the expression of her face mild, open, without pride; her nose, mouth, and chin, were beautiful; her bosom and arms plump and finely formed: in short, she far surpassed all the other beauties of the country. All that one could say to describe her would fall far short of what she really was. The duke, who wished to possess her at any price, sent one of his knights and his trusty chancellor to demand her, directing the latter to promise the father so much that he could not refuse her, and to say that she should at first be loved with the warmest love, and afterwards given to some wealthy lord. The father, who was one of the richest in-

habitants of Falaise, at first refused her, and even considered the application as an insult. He meant to marry her to one whom he liked: several suitors had asked for her, and he would not for the world allow her to be the mistress of any man whatsoever.

"Such was his determination, when one of his brothers, a holy personage, a very religious man, who had an hermitage in the wood of Gouffern, prevailed upon him to change it; for he dissuaded him from his idea, prudent or imprudent, of concealing his daughter; nay, he so wrought upon him by his counsels that he was ready to comply with the wishes and the will of the duke.

"The young damsel, on her part, explained to him very sensibly what advantages he might derive from the circumstance. The matter was accordingly settled, and the night and the hour fixed for one of the days of the week. Meanwhile, the agitated damsel thought only how to appear before the duke in such a manner as would be well pleasing to him, and suitable to her condition and wealth. She therefore had a new dress made, neatly worked and fitting close, in order to set off her beauty. And when the appointed night arrived, the two messengers of the duke went to her to conduct her privily to the castle.

"But this was not pleasing to the young damsel. And they said to her: 'Wrap yourself, fair one, in this linen cloak, and take care that no one sees you; for your neighbours and the low people would not fail to speak lightly of you. To-morrow,

before the day dawns and the lark is singing, we will bring you back hither as secretly.'

"'And is it so?' immediately replied the prudent damsel, who was not wanting in spirit, 'is it so? And if the duke send for me to enjoy my fair body, am I to go to him like a maid-servant or an outcast? No! I will go to him, if it must be, but as a reputable person, as the daughter of a respectable man, in order to increase in honours and riches. Know that I fear nothing, and that every one may see me and what I do: and never will I do, from inclination, levity, or folly, any thing that people can find fault with. Besides, see if I can go on foot to the duke in this dress. Fetch your parade horses, I beg you; we shall then go the more conveniently?'

"The messengers, who found this language extremely sensible, did what she desired. She had covered her lovely body with a fine under-garment, put on over that a grey pelisse, fresh, soft, without folds, fitting tight to her waist and arms, and thrown over all a small, very elegant mantle in the best taste. Her long auburn hair was fastened up attractively by a riband and a fine silver net. Thus dressed, and looking more beautiful than she had ever done before, she mounted a horse, saluted her mother and her father, and then, overcome all at once with inward anxiety, she began to weep, so that her fair bosom was wet with her tears.

"Oh! had she been able to look into futurity, how great would then have been her joy! for since Hector, the hero of Troy, who was the son of Priam,

the world has not seen a greater prince than he who was begotten that night. Arthur was valiant; so was Charles the Great, the conqueror of Spain. But when you know the history of him whom I am about to celebrate, you will not say, I hope, that a more valiant prince ever lived. Thus God often permits the greatest advantages for the future to arise out of weakness. The duke had in truth taken to himself on this occasion an easy and compliant friend, instead of a wife, according to the laws; but it was afterwards shewn beyond a doubt that God loved and protected the issue of this connexion.

" Those who were conducting the damsel to the duke, after they had led her to the door of the castle, made her alight before it, then caused the postern to be opened, went in, and desired her to follow them. But she, more shrewd than simple, refused to stir another step, at which they were highly astonished. 'Fair one,' said they, 'come on, be not afraid, the way is clear.'—'O no, indeed I shall not, for that is neither right nor prudent,' immediately replied the damsel. 'Why, when the duke sends for me, is his door to be shut against me? Let it be opened, or he must give up all hope of possessing me. If he wishes to have me with him, it is not decorous to make me enter by this postern. God forbid, at least, that I should do so! To a certainty he must esteem me very lightly, as he treats me in this manner. Open the door, my good friends.'

" At these words, the sound sense and justice of which delighted the messengers, they hastened to

open the door to the damsel, and they led her forthwith to the vaulted chamber, which contained many images in gold and in colours. And there the duke, who was impatiently waiting for her, received her with great joy and great honour, and gaye her his whole love."

I know not whether the narrator was a Norman, whether he borrowed his account from popular tradition, or whether he invented it himself. So much, however, is certain, that the conduct of Harlotte, as he represents it, is that of a genuine Norman woman. She is shrewd and prudent, and contrives to turn the sacrifice which she is ready to make to the very best account. The intervention of the reverend brother is also in perfect accordance with the times; for the people were then not such adepts in the quirks and quibbles of casuistry as not to need the aid of a spiritual adviser, when, as in this case, there was something to be done which was forbidden by the laws of religion. If the preceding narrative is really founded on fact, the clerical gentleman no doubt duly instructed his niece, and gave her lessons how she was to behave. In the Chronicle of Normandy we find a continuation of this account, which seems also to exhibit traces of the tuition of the hermit, who, it is to be presumed, was acquainted with the dreams recorded in the Old Testament. There the story of Robert's love for Harlotte is thus related:

"It so happened that the duke Robert was at Falaise. There he saw the daughter of a townsman, whose name was Arlette. This maiden was beau-

tiful, good, and graceful, and she pleased duke Robert so much that he wished to have her for his friend, and most respectfully demanded her from her father. The father at first refused to comply with his wish. The duke, however, besought him so earnestly, that, on account of the great love which he saw in the duke for his maiden daughter, he granted his consent, provided the maiden gave her's. He then spoke to her about the matter. She answered: 'Father, I am your child; you can command, and I am ready to do my duty as well as I can.' And when the duke was informed of this, it gave him great joy. And when night came, she was brought and conducted to the bed of the duke, and there left alone with him in the chamber..... When the duke had had his pleasure with her, and when they had conversed with one another as much and as long as they pleased, Arlette fell asleep, and the duke did not disturb her, and began to think of all sorts of things. And, while he was so thinking, the lady started and heaved a very deep sigh. And the duke drew her to him, and asked what was the matter. 'My lord,' said she, 'I have been dreaming, and dreamt that a tree grew out of my body up to the sky, and that all Normandy was covered by its shade.' 'Very good,' said the duke, 'be not afraid,'" &c.

So much for the chronicles and the ancient poets.

In Falaise and the environs, the name of William the Conqueror is still in every body's mouth. The aged tell the children about him, and the boys re-

peat him in their sports. As I passed through the town, I observed a house on which his name was inscribed after this fashion:

MAISON
DE
GUILLAUME
LE GRAND CONQUERANT.
RICHARD
DONNE À BOIRE ET À MANGER.

According to the popular notion, this house really was once the dwelling of William the Conqueror, and ancient records, in which it is mentioned as "manoir de Guillaume le conquerant," give great weight to this tradition. If we consider that his mother was only Robert's mistress, it will appear natural that she should have her separate house. If this were the case, the irony or the revenge of the god of history would be complete. The castle of his father, where he was begotten, is a ruin; on the spot where he learned the exercises of arms, the beadle of a college plants cabbages; in the house where he himself and his mother dwelt, a busy cook entertains his customers, sturdy labourers and husbandmen; and his tomb was destroyed by the rage of a people driven to insurrection. This is an inscription such as was never yet engraved on triumphal arch or grave-stone, and which, for him who can read it, resolves itself into a curse pronounced by Chance or Providence.

The history of Normandy frequently exhibits the

most extraordinary complications in the lives of the men whose names it has preserved. Liberty and its institutions fostered in the inhabitants of this country, so long as it was not under the control of any other, an energy and a spirit of independence which are incessantly reminding us of the heathen hardihood of their ancestors. *There* existed *men:* for no scourge could train them up to schoolboys. Hence that force of will, that strength of character, which impart such high dramatic interest to the history of independent Normandy; which show us how a handful of Normans, driven ashore by tempest, overthrew kingdoms and founded new ones; how an exile, expatriated for his turbulence, could carve out with his sword a new inheritance in distant lands. In the history of Falaise we meet also with a fugitive, who, driven from distant lands by the foes of his nation, found an asylum in Normandy. But he was not a Norman; he was not a son of a free, high-spirited, youthful people — he was the last scion of a decayed stock, which a new race had cut down because it stood in their way. A Palæologus fled, after the fall of Constantinople, to Normandy, and was there appointed, by way of charity, to the government of Falaise.

The very women of Normandy would have had a right to ask him, "Why didst thou not perish under the walls of Constantinople?" for they furnished frequent occasion to admire their valour. I have often adverted to this subject, and must not pass over in silence the heroism of two women of Falaise,

who distinguished themselves during the siege of their town by Henry IV.

The king's troops poured through the breach into the town, but here commenced a most obstinate conflict, in which the women took a prominent part. There a young female of Falaise was seen fighting with the greatest intrepidity by the side of her lover, and resisting a host of foes. At length, a mortal stroke stretched her lover at her feet. In vain did the king's soldiers strive to persuade her to desist from the fight: her courage was only inflamed to fury by the fall of her lover, and she rushed with redoubled strength upon the assailants, till at last she too received a mortal blow, and, sinking upon the body of her bridegroom, expired.

A second female, whom the people called "la grande Eperonnière," distinguished herself in such a manner at one of the gates as to attract the notice of the king, who sent for her after the place was taken. She went without fear into his presence, and even there did not forget what she owed to the town and to her fellow-citizens. She besought the king to spare at least the old men, the children, and the women. Henry, touched by her heroism and noble sentiments, permitted her to retire with her treasures, and the persons whom she wished to save, into one of the streets, which he ordered to be closed. This street is still called, in memory of the circumstance, Camp-fermant, or Camp-fermé.

As the history of Falaise furnishes such striking instances of the heroism of the Norman women, so it

exhibits a curious evidence of the litigiousness of the Norman men. In the year 1386, a sow ate part of the child of a day-labourer of Falaise named Janet. This accident reached the ears of the judge, who condemned the animal to suffer publicly the penalty of retaliation, as prescribed by law. The face and one arm of the child had been devoured: the sow was mutilated in the same manner, and then hanged by the executioner in the public place, amidst a concourse of people. The judge presided at the execution on horseback, with a feather in his hat. The father was forced to attend, by way of punishment, for not taking proper care of his child. The culprit, when brought to the gallows, was dressed like a man, wore a waistcoat, breeches, and gloves, and a human mask before her snout.

The annals of criminal justice cannot certainly produce many such trials and executions; and I think that the fondness of the ancient Normans for litigation needs no further evidence than this sow.

But enough of the Falaise of yesterday; let us say a few words concerning the Falaise of to-day.

History has hitherto rarely recorded any name the owner of which has not compelled her to dip her pen in blood. Perhaps a different time may come; but, when I bethink me of the enthusiasm which Napoleon still excites, it seems to me that this time is still at a great distance from us. The Falaise of to-day possesses two men who will sink into oblivion, because they have been content with the sphere which chance has allotted to them, and because in

this sphere they have employed every moment of their lives in labouring for the welfare of their fellow-citizens.

Falaise has recently been making great progress. Its agriculture has been improved, its industry extended, and above all, instruction has struck deeper root in the people. It is to two men in particular — there may be others with whom I am not acquainted, because they labour more in private than these two—that Falaise is indebted for this advancement. One of them is Galleron, procureur du roi, the other, Travers, director of the College. Both take advantage of their position solely to do good; and to this all their time is devoted. The increase of the schools in the country, and the improvement and greater efficiency of those in the town, are their work. A town library, which has existed but a few years, and contains several thousand volumes, was founded by M. Galleron, who induced upwards of a hundred of the townspeople to contribute a yearly subscription of ten francs. The town gave the rooms requisite for the purpose; and the preservation and increase of this library depend upon the contributions of the citizens.

For these few years past an "Association pour le Progrès de l'Agriculture, de l'Industrie, et de l'Instruction," formed at the instigation of the two gentlemen above-mentioned, has published an "Annuaire de l'Arrondissement de Falaise," compiled and chiefly written by themselves, and calculated entirely for the people, pointing out to them in the

simplest tone the improvements that may be made in the husbandry, manufactures, and industry of the district, combating their prejudices, and giving them instruction. Since 1830 there were at Falaise three societies; a "Société Litteraire," a "Société d'Agriculture," and that just mentioned, which, at the instigation of those gentlemen, have united, in order that with their joint force they may operate the more effectively. For the extension of public instruction, they have brought about monthly meetings of teachers in the circumjacent villages, which are always attended by one or other of those officials for the purpose of instructing and encouraging the teachers by deed and by advice. And they need such encouragement, but more of that anon.

Their main object, however, seems to be to give a practical direction to the system of instruction. They felt how far it is from sufficient for ordinary life to acquire a slight proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic; they therefore set about devising means for initiating the children in other necessary and useful branches of knowledge. They called for assistance upon all those in Falaise who were capable of furthering the progress in this or the other science, induced them to write elementary works in a language intelligible to youth, and got them lithographed. I have seen a collection of these, which might serve as a model for all schools. A M. Alphonse de Brebisson has in this manner described and delineated the trees, their wood, and their fruit, and also the principal plants that grow

in the environs of Falaise, and thus put a popular system of botany into the hands of both masters and scholars. Another part contains the "Principles of Religion and Morality Illustrated by Examples." A third, by M. Galleron, gives a "History of the Arrondissement of Falaise;" a fourth contains a "History of Music and the Elements of that Science," by M. Huteil, teacher of music; in two other parts, M. St. Ange-Plet, director of the Ecole mutuelle, gives a "Popular Geometry;" lastly, M. Lerant, ancien avocat, juge de paix at Falaise, the "Principles of Legislation," in which we find the duties of children to their parents and of parents to their children, the duties of guardians to their wards and vice versa, and those of citizens in general to the state, presented in a clear and comprehensive manner.

I wish my limits permitted me to do more than merely quote the titles: but what I have already stated is sufficient to afford an idea of the efforts making by philanthropists in Falaise. Ought they not to suffice to raise up imitators?

I should never have done were I to enter more into detail. The following general observations, moreover, will lead me back often enough to the men who have made the moral and intellectual welfare of their fellow-citizens the study of their lives.

With the revolution of July commenced a new era for France. In the three days, the mind threw off its fetters more completely than the body, and

then began to move free and unrestrained. One of the immediate consequences of this revolution was that a desire for instruction was awakened in the people, and that in all quarters there started up men who felt a vocation to supply that want to the best of their ability. The result for Falaise may be summed up in a few figures. In 1830 there existed in this town but one school of the *frères ignorantins*, and the number of their scholars amounted to 180. In the year after the revolution of July, a second school of mutual instruction was established, and soon obliged the *frères* to make very material reforms in their's. At present this second school numbers 220 scholars, and that of the *frères* 300. The proportion between the scholars in 1830 and 1837 was as 180 to 520.

But this was not sufficient for the promoters of illumination. The neglected state in which the war-loving Empire and the light-hating Restoration left the people, caused a great number of the older persons of the lower classes to be brought up without any education whatever; the necessity of making a provision for these was felt, and thus there were established in Falaise gratuitous schools for labouring people in the different suburbs, where 140 persons of the working classes are daily receiving instruction, and where father and son may frequently be seen sitting side by side and mutually exciting and encouraging one another. A statistical report of the criminal jurisprudence for the arrondissement of Falaise affords numerical evidence that instruc-

tion promotes morality and integrity, if such evidence were at all necessary. In a total of 62,349 inhabitants, this report gives

for 1829,	121	prosecutions,	of which	43 were for theft.
„ 1830,	158	„	„	25 „
„ 1831,	114	„	„	27 „
„ 1832,	114	„	„	36 „
„ 1833,	93	„	„	24 „
„ 1834,	110	„	„	24 „
„ 1835,	93	„	„	23 „

The decrease of theft is particularly striking, as this argues an improvement in the material condition of the inhabitants of the arrondissement.

In the first years after the revolution of July, the government and the chambers followed the general impulse, and did their utmost for the diffusion and improvement of public instruction. M. Guizot's law of the 28th of June, 1833, in spite of its blunders, shows at any rate the earnestness with which the government set about this improvement of the public instruction. Since that time, various changes have taken place. The fundamental idea of a government must necessarily carry itself out in its remotest consequences. The system of M. Guizot and the government, or rather of the government and therefore of M. Guizot, recognises only the wealthier inhabitants of the country, the landed proprietors, as really citizens of the state. The consequence of this system is of course the moral dependence of all who are not citizens of the state

on those who become such by being electors, or eligible. This dependence cannot take place and last, unless there is really a moral superiority on the one hand, and a moral inferiority on the other, which is not possible in a truly enlightened and polished nation. The government and the partisans of its system cannot therefore be friends of general enlightenment, as this would render their system impossible. Till the year 1835, this was felt by individual adherents of the government; after the trials in April they knew it, and were not backward to say it, as the papers of the doctrinaires have often enough shown.

Since that time, public instruction has every where met with obstacles, especially in the country and in the smaller country-towns. In these, in general, a few opulent proprietors, who are devoted, soul and body, to the government, who are guided by its agents and its journals, possess the exclusive influence over the communal councils and the people; and hence it is that, as soon as they have received the watch-word from Paris, they act in their localities agreeably to the wishes entertained in Paris, and often go much farther than they in Paris dare venture to do. In every town, in every village in France, down to the very smallest and meanest, where some other party has not the preponderance, this influence asserts its sway. For the arrondissement of Falaise the following figures again speak plainly enough. Till the year 1835 there was an advancing improvement; it then became stationary, and a re-

trograde movement succeeded. The statement for that and the next year is as follows :—

	1835	1836
Communal schools	64	67
Private schools ....,.....	12	11
Female teachers	19	21
Number of children of both sexes attending the schools in winter	4729	4600
„ „ in summer	3292	3139
„ receiving no instruction	690	830
School-children paying in winter ...	3431	3211
„ not paying „	1298	1399

In the same year that the progress of public instruction ceased at Falaise, and a retrogression became perceptible, the statistics of the administration of justice exhibited an increase of crimes. While only 93 legal prosecutions were necessary in 1835, we find 101 in 1836, and instead of 23 thefts no fewer than 36. This is a sign of the times that our calculating age ought at least to understand.

All these facts I have found in the Annuaire of the Society for the Improvement of Agriculture, Industry, and Public Instruction, of 1836 and 1837. The latter contains this passage :—"The majority of the municipal councillors, though composed of citizens, who ought above all to encourage public instruction, have shown themselves hostile to it; some refusing a school of any kind; others cavilling with the master till he resigned his office; and others again, and these form the greater number, fixing the master's salary so low as to discourage

men whose usefulness nothing but ill-will or the most deplorable blindness can refuse to acknowledge."

Methinks this is enough to confirm the above views concerning the influence of the principles prevailing in a government. If the government were seriously intent on progressing, not one municipal council in a thousand would oppose it. In fact, throughout all France public instruction became more and more diffused so long as the government was seriously disposed to encourage it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Vire—The Castle—Cloth Manufactures—Comeliness of the Women—Lecture on their Dress—Fate of the Lecturer—Olivier Basselin, a minstrel of the Fourteenth Century; specimens of his Songs—Jean le Houx; specimens of his Compositions—Flers; tradition respecting the origin of a Lake in its Environs—Evreux; historical traits connected with it—Abortive Attempt to introduce the Inquisition—Ecclesiastical Reforms of bishop Claude de Sainte—Anecdote of his Successor—Anecdote illustrative of the Character of the People.

VIRE is a small town of 10,000 inhabitants, on the river of the same name, in the department of Calvados. It was formerly the chief town of the Bocage. The environs of the place, which is seated on a hill, are picturesque: the Vire and the Virène, which unite here, form beautiful, verdant, animated valleys, in which the clack of the paper-mills and the operations of the cloth manufacture alternate with the repose of the wooded hills.

In the ancient castle of Vire there are at present the library, the hotel de ville, and in the courtyard a fountain, to which washer men, as well as women, resort in great numbers. For those who are fond of such things, these are remarkable enough. At times, unfortunately, I am better pleased with the

tattle of washerwomen than with the learned jabber of libraries. In regard to antiquities too I am rather difficult; and, even if they were built in Adam's time, I could pass them with indifference, if they have no story to tell.

The cloth manufactures in the environs are not precisely the best in France; nay, formerly they did a great deal of business, because they furnished cloth of such bad quality that no other manufacture in France could compete with it. In general, to be sure, bad cloth is not in great request; and the Revolution alone could go so far in its plebeian stoicism as to prefer that of Vire to any other. The republic was poor and economical, and therefore purchased the cheapest cloth that could be got for its soldiers. The people of Vire sent cloth to the Cisalpine army, and thus the sans-culottes got culottes and the cloths of Vire the name of Cisalpins. Subsequently, when republican simplicity was superseded by imperial luxury, the cloth-trade of Vire declined, because the manufacturers of that place, accustomed to make a cheap and bad commodity, could not for some time get into the way of producing a better.

The race of people in all Lower Normandy, especially in the smaller towns, is very robust, and the women are mostly good-looking. These are chiefly engaged in household occupations, while the men almost exclusively pursue the labours of agriculture. The former are consequently less sunburnt, and have in general handsome hands and feet. At Vire you

meet with scarcely any but comely women, frequently having fair complexions, but mostly brunettes. A fresh healthy colour, lively and expressive eyes, a good figure of middling height, and a light easy gait, give them an appearance that is really charming; and they are not only attractive in person, but mostly of a lively cheerful disposition, unaffected and intelligent in conversation, and excellent housewives. Like those of Germany, they take a particular pride in their linen, which is therefore their first and their last care.

But they seem to have inherited something from the French. Their dress is at present plain and neat, and I must confess that I could perceive in it no more fondness for fashion and coquetry than in that of any other women. But it appears that they could not always have thought and acted as they do now. In a history of their country and their town,* I met with the following passage:

"What I shall say of it [the dress of the women] generally is that, as the women of former times were decent and chaste, and prided themselves on being grave and modest, so those of the present day strive by all means in their power to appear rude and voluptuous. We no longer live in the times when ladies of quality appeared with girdles like those of cordeliers. Their garments were as wide and thick as those of the women of our days are scanty and light, and so fine that at every motion the contours of the body are so exactly defined as to

* Seguin, Essai sur l'histoire de l'industrie du Bocage. Vire, 1810.

leave nothing to be imagined. Scarcely do they cover the bosom with a very light transparent veil, or a sort of collar, which they call *point-à-jour*, and which, while covering all, conceals nothing; so that, if they do not display all their charms to the view, it is because the least scrupulous men, who are content to rally them at present, would be absolutely shocked. Besides, it is not yet the fashion. Many even carry their impudence so far as to come into our temples without caps, and their hair bristling like furies!" Oh! the wretches!

"After disgracing the dress of women, they have also prostituted that of men. We have seen them successively adopting hats, great-coats, jackets, waistcoats, boots, nay, even buttons!"

Atrocious! Well might M. Seguin express his indignation! The impious jades even wore buttons! "Would to God," proceeds the gallant combatant of women's buttons, "that the ancient laws were still in force, and that those, whether hes or shes, who wear indecent dresses, were obliged to go to Rome to obtain absolution, which could only be granted by the sovereign pontiff. But I doubt very much, whether the sovereign pontiff would ever have granted them absolution, unless they had previously subjected their flesh to severe castigation."

At this lesson of repentance the people of Vire felt grievously nettled, and as M. Seguin had attacked the manufacturers as well as the women, and charged them with making bad cloth, a storm burst one morning over his head. Men and women re-

solved to seize the traducer of his country, and M. Seguin deemed it advisable to take to his heels, like the hero Æneas. I dare say the Normans of both sexes would have forgiven without hesitation all his other treasons; but to talk of sending the women to Rome to obtain absolution, and the men to school to their neighbours to learn to make cloth, was too dire an offence. M. Seguin was hanged, poor fellow, after a very summary trial, and then they made an auto-da-fé, and burned the heretic with all due ceremony, that is to say, in effigy. How I should like to have seen this formidable riot! The ladies of Vire, attacked in the tenderest point, their caps, and gowns, and petticoats, showed, no doubt, a becoming spirit on the occasion. Upon the whole, however, I should hardly have given the people of Vire credit for so violent a proceeding, for they are a kindly race; and who knows but the whole affair may have been rather jocose than serious. At any rate, it furnishes a confirmation of a peculiarity in the character of the Lower Normans already noticed in treating of Caen not to suffer any one to pry into their domestic concerns. Let every body sweep before his own door, is their maxim, against which M. Seguin had grievously sinned, for he had not only talked about what others did, but written, printed, and published—ay published it—think of that!

I made too short a stay at Vire to have it in my power to be more explicit concerning the state of society there; but two old popular minstrels have left striking monuments in the strains which they

composed for their townspeople in former times. I have more than once remarked that the Normans of old were addicted to song, and that even at the present day they still furnish evidence of this disposition in their poets.

Olivier Basselin lived in the middle of the fourteenth century in the vicinity of Vire. He was the proprietor of a water-mill, but he seems to have cared very little about the water or the mill either, for he was a minstrel, and of course a foe to water. This enmity was carried so far, that the mill was at times neglected on account of it; and his relatives were at length obliged to consign the jovial and thirsty miller and his affairs to the care of trustees, which seems to have given him no particular concern. Basselin was the first plebeian who, after the clergy in their psalms, and the gentry in their love-ditties, had contrived to keep to themselves for some centuries a monopoly of song, raised his rather rude voice. His predecessors had so worn out the subjects of the blessed Virgin and their ladye-love, that it was quite a relief to hear once more a jolly drinking song. And Basselin sang:

Nous sommes armez comme il faut,
A l'arme! à l'assault, à l'assault!
Nous sommes armez comme il faut!
Chascun monstre ce qu'il sait faire.

La trompette a sonné bien haut,
A l'arme, à l'assault, à l'assault!
La trompette a sonné bien haut
Encor premier nous faut il boire.
Nous sommes armez comme il faut,
Chascun monstre ce qu'il sait faire!

Nous en aurons le cœur plus chaud,
A l'arme ! à l'assault, à l'assault !
Nous en aurons le cœur plus chaud,
Et vaincrons mieux nos adversaires.
Nous sommes armez comme il faut,
Chascun monstre ce qu'il sait faire.

A un j'ai fait faire un beau sault,
A l'arme ! à l'assault, à l'assault !
A un j'ai fait faire un beau sault
Vous en fairez en la manière.
Nous sommes armez comme il faut,
Chascun monstre ce qu'il sait faire.

These were strains of a kind and in a tone that had become very rare, and that were heard at most perhaps in the well supplied convent, from the lips of a jolly priest, who, in case one of the profane chanced to approach the sanctuary, immediately folded his hands and devoutly said, " In nomine Dei patris et filii. Amen !" But Basselin sang his song in broad day, taught it his neighbours, and they sang along with him.

After this spirited call upon his fellow-combatants to storm the bottle, one has no scruple to take his word for it that he was a genuine toper. But he himself tells us that he carried about him the distinctive mark of the boon companion; for he thus sings his nose :

Quand mon nez deviendra de couleur rouge ou perse,
[Je] Porteray les couleurs que cherit ma maitresse.
Le vin rend le teint beau.
Vaut il pas mieux avoir la couleur rouge et vive,
Riche de beau rubis, que pasle et chétive,
Ainsi qu'un buveur d'eau ?

His philosophy of life and his politics are e pounded in the following :

He ! qu'avons-nous affaire
Du Turc et du Sophy !
Don ! Don !
Pourvu que j'ai à boire
De grandeurs je d'y fi,
Don ! Don !
Trinque, seigneur, *le vin est bon*
Hoc acuit *ingenium.*

Qui song en vin ou vigne
Et un présage heureux,
Don ! Don !
Le vin à qui rechigne
Rend le cœur tout joyeux
Don ! Don !
Trinque, seigneur, le vin est bon,
Hoc acuit ingenium.

Mechant est qui le brouille,
Je parle aux taverniers,
Don ! Don !
Le breuvage à grenouille
Ne doit estre aux celliers,
Don ! Don !
Trinque, seigneur, le vin est bon,
Hoc acuit ingenium.

Que ce vin on ne coupe,
Ainçois qu'on boire net,
Don ! Don !
Je prie toute la troupe
De vider le godet,
Don ! Don !
Trinque, seigneur, le vin est bon,
Hoc acuit ingenium.

Nothing could keep him from his bottle, and even when Vire was besieged, he pursued his

course undisturbed, like the philosopher of old, and sang :—

Tout à l'entour de nos remparts
Les ennemis sont en furie !
Sauvez nos tonneaux, je vous prie !
Prenez plustot de nous, soudarts,
Tout ce dont vous aurez envie
Sauvez nos tonneaux, je vous prie.

Nous pourions après en buvant
Chasser notre melancolie.
Sauvez nos tonneaux, je vous prie,
L'ennemi qui est si devant,
Ne nous veut faire courtoisie,
Vidons nos tonneaux, je vous prie.

Au moins s'il prend notre cité,
Q'il n'y trouve plus que la lie,
Vidons nos tonneaux, je vous prie,
Dussions nous marcher de costé
Ce bon cildre n'espargnons pas.
Vidons nos tonneaux, je vous prie.

His physic was of the same kind :

On dit qu'il (wine) nuit aux jeux, mais seront ils les maistres,
La vin est guerison
De mes maux ; j'aime mieux perdre les deux fenètres
Que toute la maison.

Sometimes he was bolder and made game of the scholars :

Certes : hoc vinum est bonus,
Du mauvais latin ne vous chaille.
Le bien congru n'estait ce jus
Et tout ne voudroit rien qui vaille.
Escolier j'apris que bon vin
Aide bien au mauvais latin.

Cette sentence pratiquant
De latin je n'appris guère
Y pensant estre assez sçavant
Puisque bon vin aimoy à boire.
Lorsque mauvais vin on a bu,
Latin n'est bon, fust-il congru.

Fi du latin, parlons françois,
Je m'y recognais davantage,
Je veux boire une bonne fois
Car voici un maistre breuvage,
Certes, si j'en beuvay souvent
Je deviendray fort eloquent.

That he knew enough of the Bible to undergo an examination in the catechism he proves in these lines:

Adam, c'est chose très notoire
Ne nous eut mis en tel dangier
Si au lieu du fatal mangier
Il se fust plustost pris a boire.

But the jolly tippler could sing of love as well as wine; witness the following ballad:

En un gardin d'ombrage tout couvert,
Au chaud du jour ay trouvé Madeleine,
Qui près le pied d'un aycomore vert,
Dormait au bord d'une claire fontaine:
Son lit estait de thym et margoleine.
Son tetin frais n'estait pas bien caché
D'amour touché,
Pour contempler sa beauté souveraine
Incontinent je m'en suis aproché.
Sus, sus, qu'on se reveille
Voici vin excellent,
Qui fait lever l'oreille,
Il fait mal qui n'en prend.

Je n'eus pouvoir, si belle la voyant
De m'abstenir de baizotter sa bouche,
Si bien qu'enfin la belle s'esveillant,
Me regardant avec un œil farouche,
Me dit ces mots: Biberon ne me touche
Tu n'est pas digne avec moi d'esprouver
Le jeu d'aimer,
Belle fillette à son aize ne couche
Avec celui qui ne fait qu'yvrogner.
Sus, sus, qu'on se reveille,
Voici vin excellent,
Qui fait lever l'oreille,
Il fait mal qui n'en prend.

Je lui reponds: Ce n'est deshonneur
D'aimer le vin, une chose si bonne.
Vostre bel œil entretient en chaleur,
Et le bon vin en santé ma personne.
Pour vous aimer faut-il que j'abandonne
Le soin qu'on doit avoir de sa santé?
Fi de beauté
Que son amant de deplaisir guerdonne,
Au lieu du bien qu'il avait merité.
Sus, sus, qu'on se reveille,
Voici vin excellent,
Qui fait lever l'oreille,
Il fait mal qui n'en prend.

J'aime bien mieux l'ombre d'un cabaret
Et du bouchon la taverne vineuse,
Que cil qui est en un beau jardinet.
La belle alors me respond depiteuse,
Tu ne m'est bon, cherche une autre amoureuse.
Puisque par toy j'ay perdu mes amours
Toujours! Toujours!
Contre l'amour et le soif rigoureux
Que j' sois, bon vin, armé de ton secours.
Sus, sus, qu'on se reveille,
Voici vin excellent,
Qui fait lever l'oreille,
Il fait mal qui n'en prend.

I subjoin another song or two, not only as still more strongly characteristic of the merry toper, but also as calculated to convey a tolerably high idea of his poetic talent—in the 14th century, be it recollected.

Quand je suis sans verre et breuvaige
C'est sans coq un limaçon,
Sans livrée c'est un plaige,
C'est un écolier sans leçon.

C'est un chasseur sans sa trompe,
Sans braquette un lansquenet,
C'est un navire sans pompe,
C'est un berger sans flageolet.

C'est un soudart sans panache,
C'est sans fifre un tambourin,
C'est un charpentier sans hache,
C'est un orfèvre sans burin.

Sans vin je perds contenance
C'est ce qui mieux me convient,
Comme au cavalier sa lance,
Et la baguette à un sergent.

Je vous annonce la guerre,
Pour l'amour de mon amy,
Que voici dedans ce verre
Je ne boiroy point à demy,

Boire autant de fois du bon
Qu'a de lettres nostre nom
Cela guarit nostre vie
De soin et melancolie.

J'en veuil avoir le cœur net
Versez donc dans ce godet,

Sur ce cildre d'excellence
J'en voy faire l'experience.

Mon nom est trop court vrayment
Veu ce breuvaige excellent,
J'y voudrais bien encore mettre
A tout le nom une lettre.

Si le boïre n'est pas bon
Jean simplement j'aurais nom,
Mais si ce breuvage idoyne,
Mon nom sera Marc Antoine.

Basselin's songs are sufficiently remarkable in a literary point of view, especially when we consider the period in which they were composed. He was the creator of the drinking song in France, and moreover the father of the Vaudeville, the ancestor of M. Scribe. Basselin called his pieces after the place where he sang them, Vaudevires, which time has transformed into Vaudevilles. Some, however, assert that the Vaudevilles are much more ancient, and that their name is derived from voix des villes; but the greater number of French literati do not question Basselin's paternity.

But these poems are likewise of consequence as illustrating the character of the old Normans. Basselin was one of the people, and, sprung from the people, it was to the people that he sang his pieces. Most of these are songs for the table, in which the whole company joined, plying the glass the while. This we perceive in most of them at the first glance. In the following this popular practice is plainly expressed :—

C'est assez ! troupe honorable,
De ces gentils chants virois,
Il faut se lever de table,
Le reste en un autre fois.
Car peut-estre
Que le maistre
Qui nous assemble ceans
N'ose dire
Le martyre
Et le mal que lui font les dents.
Sauvant incommodité
Provient d'avoir trop chanté.

Mais il est trop volontaire
Pour avoir le cœur marry
D'avoir vu la bonne chère
Que nous avons fait chez lui.
Monsieur l'hoste
Voyez, j'oste
Mon bonnet honestement
On me prie
Que je die
Qu'on vous rend grace humblement.
Mais si le vin reste au pot
Sommes encor de l'écot.

Faites en laver la bouche
A quelques uns d'entre nous,
Avant qu'un varlet y touche,
Puisque tant depend de nous ;
Je ne cure,
Je vous jure,
Jamais ma bouche autrement.
Nostre hostesse
Je vous laisse
Mille mercis en payement.
Cecy serait esvènté
J'en boy à vostre santé.

J'ai ouy dire à ma grande mère,
Toujours des vieux on aprend,
Que de la goute dernière
La bonne chère depend.
Bonne femme
Que ton ame
Puisse estre au ciel en repos!
J'ay envie
Si j'ai vie
D'ensuivre bien tes propos.
Quand sur le bon vin je suis
J'en laisse moins que je puis.

Jean Chapelain, an old *romancier* of that time, says, concerning the custom of the *rondes de table* in Normandy : —

Usaige est en Normandie
Que qui hebergiez est qu'il die
Fable ou chanson à son hoste,

and thus proves that Basselin was not the only minstrel of his time, but that every guest sang his landlord a song or told him a story, a practice that carries us back to the manners and customs of the North. But the fact that we still possess these songs is the most striking proof of the fondness of the ancient Normans for song, that the compositions of the thirsty wine-bibber of Normandy were adopted by his countrymen, and by them transmitted down to us in spite of time and events. It was not till a century later that a countryman of Basselin's, his successor in the priesthood to the god of wine, Jean le Houx, of Vire, wrote them down from the lips of the people.

Le Houx had as strong an antipathy to water as Basselin himself:—

L'eau ne fait que mal au ventre,
Quel bien fait elle aux gosiers
Que ne fait pas aux souliers
Et bottes, quand elle y entre.

He was an advocate, and as Basselin left his mill to its fate so did Le Houx his office, that he might drink and sing without molestation. But, while Basselin had to do only with his relatives and his trustees, the poor advocate fared infinitely worse. The clerical guardians of the people took offence at his songs; they regarded them as an invasion of their privileges, and condemned them to the flames, and the poet to a pilgrimage to Rome to obtain absolution for the heinous mortal sin. What would M. Seguin say to this?

Le Houx had attempted to defend his songs in a song:—

On les a censurez,
Les pauvres voux de-vires;
Un tas de rechingez
Ne cessent de medire,
Veulent ces morfondus
Nous empecher de rire?
Ils font les entendus
Et ne peuvent rien dire.

Qui joyeux et gaillard
Chantant ne boit du pire
Vaud mieux qu'un vieux mulard
Qui toujours est en ire.

C'est du vin des ceans
Que vous voyez reluire
Gage qu'il est dedans
Pourvu que je le tire.

And again:—

Douces chansons, à tort on vous blasonne,
Beaux airs pour boire, à qui fait vous mal?
En collaudant un breuvage loyal
On ne fait tort ni dommage à personne.

The clergy, however, condemned him in spite, and indeed on account, of the defence, and the thirsty singer, a pious Christian, took up the pilgrim's staff and journeyed to Rome. But he could not leave his dry throat and his fondness for song at home. Even by the way he thus sang:—

Voicy tous gens du courage
Lesquels s'en vont en voyage
Jusque par delà des monts
Faire ce pelerinage
Tous boire nous ne pourrons.
Que la bouteille on n'oublie!
En regrettant Normandie,
A l'ombre nous nous seoirons,
Si le chemin nous ennuye
L'un à l'autre nous boirons.

Beuvons! desja je me lasse,
Un chascun sa calebasse
Remplira, par ces chemins
En disant: Donnez de grace
A boire à ces pelerins.
Compagnon vide la tienne,
Ainsi que j'ai fait la mienne!
Quelque chance nous viendra.
Mais que la soif nous reprenne
Qui nos flaçons remplira?

Le Houx was an incorrigible sinner, and I cannot imagine how absolution could be granted to him. So much is certain, that there was no amendment in him, for on his return home the old toper thus sang :—

Tous ces vers biberons ne veulx desavouer,
Advortons que j'ai faits en majeure allegresse
Quoique je n'eusse lors une ame beuvresse,
Mais on fait souvent mal en se pensant jouer.

Je crains que quelques uns ne veulent en user
Pour servir de pretext à leur gourmande vie;
Ces vers ne pecheront, mais bien ivrognerie,
Car de tout autre chose on peut bien abuser.

Je retracte pourtant les chansons qui fairont
Scandale aux scrupuleux, et qui, sans les redire,
Un chascun les censure et bannisse de Vire,
Blasmant avec l'auteur ceux qui les chanteront.

Moi meme j'en ai honte avec un repentir
Je vouldray que jamais elles n'eussent prie vie,
Mais elles out deja embue la patrie
Malgré moi on les chante et me faut le soufrir.

Je ne laisseray pas de hanter mes amis
Sans faire toutes fois exces sur le breuvage
Contre le mauvais temps leur donnant bon courage,
Et le souhaitant tel comme il etait jadis.

Je vay boire autant pour finir ces chansons,
Lesquels ne sont pas au gré de tout le monde,
Mais quel dommage en a tout homme qui en gronde,
Si sans haine et sans mal nous nous rejouissons!

Verily the fox may shed his coat, but he cannot lay aside his cunning!

Since I know that even the innocent songs of Basselin and his successor were persecuted as heretical in Normandy, condemned as heretical by cowled hypocrites and burned, I join the more cordially in the sentiment of the honest and straightforward Luther:—

> Who loves not woman, verse, and song,
> Remains a fool his whole life long.

Five leagues from Vire, between that place and Argentan, is situated the little town of Flers, in the department of the Orne. Near it is a wood, in which is a pond, or, if you please, a small lake. The spot is silent and sequestered, and the shade of the tall trees that overhang the water gives it an appearance of extraordinary solemnity. Hence a poetic people could not pass it by unnoticed.

"Many, many years ago," says the tradition, "here stood a convent, founded by a pious man in penance for his sins, and the inhabitants of the whole surrounding country journeyed to the chapel of the monastery to be edified by the sermons of the first monks. But the convent grew rich, and the monks departed from the strict rules of their order, and where humility, poverty, and chastity had once prevailed, there soon reigned pride, luxury, and licentiousness. The monks seduced the wives and daughters of the peasants of the environs; and, as they were rich, and had abundance of every thing, they found means to increase by bribery the influence and consequence which they derived from

their profession. The convent was transformed into a palace, and, instead of prayers, nothing was heard all night long but the noisiest revels; and the songs and the cheers of tipsy priests and women usurped the place of matins.

"At length Christmas came. Even at this solemn festival they pursued their former courses, and passed night after night in riot and debauchery. The clock proclaimed the midnight hour, and the bells, which had been accustomed at that time to call together the population of the vicinity to mass, began to ring of themselves, for the friar who officiated as bell-ringer was as drunk as the others, and had neglected his duty. But the assembled monks little dreamt that an angel was ringing the bell to call them for the last time to penance. But one of the most dissolute of the monks, when he heard the bell, clasping a half-naked woman with one hand, took up his glass with the other, and cried, 'Do ye hear the mass-bell, brethren and sisters? Christ is born; let us drink to his good health.' The whole company heartily joined him; they clashed their glasses, and repeated, 'Christ is born. To his good health.'

"But none of them had time to drink, for that very moment a tremendous storm arose; lightning struck the convent, which sunk to a great depth below the surface of the ground, and the peasants of the environs, collected by the sound of the bells for midnight mass, beheld in its place a bottomless

lake, from which issued the pealing of bells till the clock struck one."

Such is the story told by the aged inhabitants of the environs of Flers. "Year after year," added the narrator, from whose lips I have written down this account, "the bells are still heard ringing on the night of Christmas Eve; and it is only for this one hour, while the monks are ringing the bells, that they obtain any remission from the torments of hell to which they are doomed."

Aged people assert that they have heard the bells, or that they knew people who had heard them. The poetry of the people, the depravity of the monks in general, an earthquake, were no doubt the sources of this tradition, which once had a moral, and still possesses a poetic value.

The history of Evreux contains traits too instructive to be omitted. It was the birthplace of Witmond, who became a monk in the convent of St. Croix Leufroy—the same who was not afraid to tell home truths to William the Conqueror. William sent for him to England; but Witmond refused the mitre and the crozier, saying, "Thy conquest is a robbery, and I will have no hand in it. The blood which it hath cost lies heavy upon thee, like that of the innocent man upon his murderer; and I will keep my hands clean from it." How refreshing it is, in those barbarous times, when even churchmen buckled on the sword that they might share the spoil, to meet with a man who

durst call the conduct of the mightiest of the mighty by its right name! It is very convenient to bark with the dogs when one is a dog, or has been properly trained.

William, more honest than those who bowed to his shadow, declared, "The friar is right!" and he was generous enough to forgive his severe language, and patiently suffer himself to be styled a robber. Had Witmond called him a bastard, he, like the garrison that once cried out to him "Pel! Pel!" would have atoned for the dire insult with his blood; but the term robber he deemed beneath his notice. He even purposed to appoint the bold monk archbishop of Rouen. But the country and the nobles set their faces against the execution of this design: they knew that a man who did not fear the Conqueror would not spare them, and so he was not elected.

When, at a later period, Normandy was reconquered by the English, the people of Evreux and its environs had frequent occasion to express their antipathy to their new masters. In 1441, in the reign of Charles VII., Evreux itself was taken by the aid of two fishermen, who conducted them in the night to the foot of the walls and provided them with the means of scaling them. A few years later, in 1447, Floques, bailly of Evreux, setting out from this place, took the town and castle of Pont de l'Arche. Here again it was a man of the lower class who opened the way into the place to the knights and soldiers. A higgler of the environs,

who, whenever he went with his cart to Rouen, stopped at Pont de l'Arche, concerted with Floques; and, early one morning, when he solicited admittance of the gatekeeper, and was actually let in by the latter who knew him, he contrived to amuse the man till the French soldiers, who were near at hand, arrived. An English sentinel, on hearing the noise, attempted to close the gate, but fell by the axe of the higgler.

Verneuil, likewise, in the vicinity of Evreux, was recovered from the English by a miller. Having been affronted by an English soldier, he went to Floques and offered to put the town into his hands. He led Floques in the night to his mill on the town wall, and as, after the town was taken, the English still retained possession of the castle, it was this miller who, by diverting the course of the stream which supplied them, obliged them to surrender.

In all these cases is displayed the active and independent spirit of the people, which could no longer brook any foreign dominion, and stimulated the nobles to co-operate in the expulsion of the foreigners.

On another occasion, about the same period, the people manifested not less energy against its own rulers. Evreux was the see of a powerful bishop, and, as a spirit of reform gradually began to awaken, and no better means of quelling it had yet been devised than the faggot and the scaffold, the bishop of Evreux, following the example of his Spanish and

Italian brethren, introduced the Inquisition in 1450. But its authority was of very brief duration. The Norman was accustomed to have justice administered in broad daylight, and the judges of the Holy Office, sneaking about in the dark, were to him an abomination. An open and free expression of opinion concerning this new mode of legal proceeding was quite sufficient to overthrow it. No riot, no insurrection, was requisite for that purpose. Public opinion is a Medusa's head, which petrifies enemies without touching them. It is not necessary to resort continually to the sword, but only to make a frank declaration of sentiments. The Normans never were base enough, they had in their composition too little of the stuff of which slaves or serfs are made, not to make known their opinions without reserve. Hence it was that, without spilling a drop of blood, they contrived, even under the absolute sway of a Louis XIV., to cause their rights to be more or less respected.

Notwithstanding the demise of the Inquisition, nay, perhaps precisely because it was so short-lived here, the Reformation made but little progress in Evreux itself; and it was only once that the adherents of the new doctrine at Evreux assembled en masse in the churchyard of St. Leger, and broke in pieces, as was then the fashion with them, an image of the Virgin and a few others. Coligny, on the other hand, besieged Evreux in vain. On inquiring into the proximate causes of this exception—for the Protestants had the ascendency for a time in all

Lower Normandy—we find that a bishop of Evreux, Claude de Sainte, had the policy to obviate the Reformation by reforms, and that Hahnemann's theory was applied three centuries ago to religion and politics. Though the prelate, like the doctor of the present day, administered his antidote in millionth parts, they sufficed to cure the disorder. He improved the breviary, the ritual, and the mass-book, reformed the clergy, forced them to lead a rather more Christian life, or at least to avoid scandal, and encouraged the sciences among them. As the inferior clergy almost every where blew the spar of the Reformation into a flame, because the higher had doomed them to inactivity and passive obedience, because there was a clerical aristocracy and a clerical democracy, and the latter was generally in rebellion against the former—he elevated it, as it were, into the sovereign people, re-constituted a sort of republic, such as existed in the first Christian congregations, abstained from issuing ordinances, and summoned a synod whenever he wished to carry any point. It is certain that, if the higher clergy had every where acted thus, Luther and Calvin would have been at this day two unknown persons, or at least known in a very different manner and degree. But this is the curse of stupidity that, having once advanced to a certain point, it cannot turn back, and must necessarily go forward till it runs its head against a rock. At any rate, the higher clergy of Evreux afforded proof of this in their treatment of Claude de Sainte; for

the homœopathic reformer of Evreux had to defend himself against the charge of being a professor of Calvinism.

The inhabitants of Evreux were such stanch Catholics, that they, with the peasants of the adjacent country, armed in behalf of the League, and obliged other towns of different sentiments to admit garrisons of its partisans, till at length Marshal Biron took Evreux itself after a short siege for Henry IV. The battle of Ivry, which decided the fate of France, and established the dynasty of Henry IV., was fought near Evreux, on the 14th of March, 1591.

Our homœopathic reformer adhered to the cause of the League, and fled when Henry's troops had taken possession of his see. He appears till his last breath to have been an implacable foe to this highly extolled sovereign, who first bartered a mass for a crown, and afterwards a crown for a mass; for we see him standing forward, in the warmth of his Christian indignation, as a defender of the king's murder. If the historian of Evreux, from whom I borrow this fact, was accurately informed, the bishop's vindication must exist in some library in London, and it must be interesting to read the arguments adduced by the pious prelate in defence of such an atrocity: but what is there that these holy personages could not prove and have not proved! And if a bishop could defend the deed, it is by no means improbable that a Jesuit could perpetrate it. Claude de Sainte was apprehended at

Caen, received sentence of death at Rouen, which was commuted at Paris to imprisonment for life, and suffered this mitigated punishment at Crève-Cœur, near Lisieux.

His successor was Jacques David de Perron, the same who converted Henry IV. Perron was the very man for this business; for he had himself been a Protestant and then turned Catholic. He must have been an adept both in converting and perverting. One day he proved to King Henry III., by the most striking evidences which can be adduced, that there is a God. All present were edified, and extolled the admirable discourse of the accomplished believer. "Sire," said the latter, "I have to day proved that there is a God: to-morrow, if your majesty will please to listen to me, I will prove by equally cogent reasons that there is no God." Against such a logician the scruples of the gallant and galant Henry IV. could not maintain their ground. Hence we are enabled to comprehend the meaning of the saying, "Paris vaut bien une messe," which the pious Perron probably took for the text of his catechisation. He was nominated Bishop of Evreux, after he had obtained absolution for Henry at Rome.

I could relate much more concerning Evreux—the burning of a heretic, and an astonishing history of the nuns in a convent near Evreux, who were possessed by the devil, and who, in their supernatural folly, wished to pursue a very different pastime with the priests of the surrounding country

than telling their beads, an affair which terminated in a sentence of death on one of the priests, the imprisonment of the prioress, and the burning of the proceedings on the trial, to avoid scandal—but I think what I have said is enough.

I shall add but a few words concerning the character of the people. A genuine Low-Norman anecdote, given in an ancient manuscript chronicle, shall suffice. One day, a sturdy peasant in the environs of Evreux was at work in the fields amidst storm and rain, and went home in the evening thoroughly tired and drenched to the skin. He was met at the house-door by his loving wife, who had been at home all day. "My dear," said she, "it has been raining so hard that I could not fetch water, and so I have not been able to make you any soup. As you are wet through, I shall be obliged to you to fetch me a couple of buckets of water; you will not get any wetter." The argument was striking; so the man took the buckets and fetched some water from the well, which was at a considerable distance. On reaching the house, he found his wife comfortably seated by the fire; there, lifting one bucket after the other, he poured both over his kind and considerate partner. "Now, wife," said he, "you are quite as wet as I am, so you may as well fetch water for yourself; you can't get any wetter." As the story has been deemed humorous enough to preserve, I have thought it remarkable enough to repeat. It moreover affords evidence of the custom prevailing in Lower Nor-

mandy, according to which the wives of husbandmen rarely go out to work in the fields, but stay at home while the men perform the out-door labour. Then again it contains an admirable lesson for both husbands and wives, and therefore deserves recording for their benefit.

CHAPTER XXV.

Origin of the Seine by St. Pierre—Continuation of St. Pierre's idyl by Charles Nodier—Historical Recollections—Beauty of the River and its Banks—The Downward Passage from Rouen recommended—The Bar—Ascent of the Seine from Havre to Rouen—Abbey of St. Gartain—Castle of Tancarville—La Pierre d'Acquit—The Devil's Tower—The Giant's Stone—Quillebeuf—The Pilots—Manners of the People of Quillebeuf—Remains of Lillebonne—Ruins of the Castle; historical Events connected with it.

BERNARDIN DE ST. PIERRE was a genuine Norman. He could not behold the beauties of his native land, without conferring on them a new life. The hill, the river, the tree, were to him more than they appear to ordinary eyes. His heart felt what his eye saw. He understood the language of Nature, and she related to him what follows:—

"The daughter of Bacchus, Seine, a nymph of Ceres, accompanied the goddess of fruit to Gaul, when she went to all the countries in the world in quest of Proserpine. When Ceres had finished her search, her attendant begged that she would give her those meadows which you see before you, in reward for her service. The goddess granted her

request, and at the same time bestowed on the daughter of Bacchus the power to make fruit and corn grow wherever she trod. She therefore left Seine in this country, and gave her for playmates and attendants several nymphs, and among others Heve, whom, as Ceres was apprehensive lest the god of the sea might some time or other carry off Seine, as the god of the nether world had done her daughter Proserpine, she charged to watch and guard her.

"One day, when Seine was playing upon the beach, looking for shells, and in sportive glee running away from the waves, which now wetted her feet, now ascended to her knees, Heve, her companion, descried among the billows the white hair, the purple face, and the azure mantle of Neptune. The god of the seas came from the Orcades after an earthquake, and was traversing the ocean, to examine with his trident whether its foundations had sustained any injury. As soon as she saw him, Heve cried out to warn Seine of the danger that threatened, and the latter immediately fled to the meadows. But the god had perceived the nymph of Ceres, and urged his sea-horses in pursuit of her. He was already near enough to stretch out his arms to grasp her, when Seine implored the aid of her father Bacchus and Ceres her mistress. They heard her prayer. The moment Neptune laid hold of her, the body of the nymph dissolved to water. Her veil and her green garments, with which the wind wantoned, became emerald-tinted

waves. She was transformed into a river, which to this day takes delight in traversing those districts that the nymph loved to frequent. But the most surprising circumstance of all is that Neptune, in spite of this metamorphosis, has not ceased to be enamoured of her—just as the river Alpheus is still said to cherish a secret love for the fountain Arethusa. But, though the god of the sea is still in love with Seine, Seine is equally stedfast in her aversion to him. Twice a day he pursues her, snorting and roaring; and each time Seine seeks refuge in her meads, hastening back, contrary to the natural direction of rivers, towards her source. And she has ever kept her green waters separate from the azure waves of Neptune.

"Heve died of grief, and a monument of white and black stones was erected for her on the shore. This is the craggy rock which to this day bears the name of Heve, and which has an echo to warn the mariner against danger, as ages ago it apprized the nymph of Ceres of the peril that threatened her.

"The other companions of Seine were metamorphosed, like herself, on the several spots where they happened to be in their flight, and are now the Aube, the Yonne, the Marne, the Oise, the Andille, and all the other rivers, which respectfully pay their tribute to their old mistress Seine.

"Amphitrite, when she heard the unwelcome tidings, caused several gulfs to be formed, that they might serve for secure harbours against the fury of her faithless spouse: and these are now the ports

which afford an asylum to navigators from the sea to Rouen."

A mind awake to the beauties of Nature and a lively imagination are displayed in this idyl of Bernardin de St. Pierre's. Charles Nodier, a clever writer of Paris, has attempted to continue St. Pierre's fiction in his own style.

"Not long afterwards," he proceeds, "Friga, the beautiful Thetis of Gaul, was jealous when she saw that Liofne, the Celtic Venus, had obtained the apple, which was the prize of beauty, while she herself had not even been invited to be a candidate for it. She resolved to be revenged. One day, when Liofne had approached the Seine, and was visiting the meads traversed by the nymph, Friga carried off the apple, which Seine had laid upon a rock, and sowed the pips in the adjacent country, in order to perpetuate her victory. Hence originated the innumerable apple-trees which grow in this country, and perhaps also the spirit of litigation, which, it is said, perpetuates lawsuits among the inhabitants." The wit here is keen enough, but it is not in keeping with the simply beautiful idyl of Bernardin de St. Pierre, and I quote it merely to show the difference. I am surprised that M. Nodier has not taken advantage of this allegory to introduce some allusion to the predatory expeditions of the ancient Normans, who seem to have learned something of old Neptune, and might, at any rate, have served for counterparts to the Greeks before Troy. This would have been moreover a perfectly

natural transition to the modern history of the Seine.

The history of the Seine?—Why should not a river have its history, as well as the country through which it runs; as the remains of yon ruined convent, of that deserted castle, concerning whose stones thick tomes are written; as that paltry village, which has merely the reputation of having once been a town! There are streams whose history would be more instructive than that of the greatest capitals in the world. The nymphs of the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Nile, would relate the ancient history of the world, the nymph of the Tiber that of the middle ages, and those of the Rhine and Seine that of modern times.

On the Seine, the Romans, the Gauls, and the Saxons, next the Franks and the Normans, and lastly the English and the French, encountered one another; and its waves have for ages been crimsoned whenever the fate of nations was decided. It has witnessed the dominion of the sword; the faggots of the Inquisition threw their glare upon its waters; it has heard the groans of the people when oppressed by the clergy, when abused, despoiled, trampled upon, by the nobles; it can relate the history of the Huguenots, the League, and the Fronde; it beheld the vain glory of Louis XIV., the infamy of a Louis XV.; and the outburst of that tempest when a nation broke its chains, and shattered with them in its fury the sculls of its keepers.

But it is acquainted too with other histories. It

could speak, for example, of the rich fleets, which the enterprising merchant loads with the fruits of the country, and the products of the toil of its labourers, and sends forth to distant lands. It could tell too of the sports of the lads and lasses on its banks, of the lovers whom it has borne by night upon its bosom—stories which would make us forget for a moment the stern gravity of national events, and transport us from the theatre of war into the joys of Eden.

Whoever understands the language may overhear all this any serene night in the murmur of the waves. But even he to whom this language is a riddle without key, may guess, at least, in a beautiful country, beside a stream whose banks exhibit here a bare rock, there a hill-side covered with terrace-like gardens, yonder luxuriant meadows and fields of waving corn, that a God has there erected himself a temple, to furnish a striking evidence of his power in the beauty of Nature. If the imagination of the spectator is not warmed by this scene, it must at least awaken feelings of devotion.

The banks of the Seine, as far as Rouen, frequently present the most exquisite prospects. Whoever travels merely to gratify the eye may, even after contemplating with amazement the deeply impressive beauties of the Rhine, still enjoy a trip on the Seine. The Seine, it is true, in its finest and grandest spots, has nothing to compare with the view from the Niederwald, the Drachenfels, Nonnenwerth and Rolandseck, and lastly the Lurlei. All these are more grave, more awful, more

sublime, or, if you will, more German. It is only at particular points on the banks of the Seine that you might fancy yourself on the Rhine. The hills are in general lower, the river, at least above Quillebeuf, where it widens almost to a sea, narrower and less imposing. Still there is near Quillebeuf a spot, which is in its way as grand, perhaps grander, than the banks of the Rhine. The stream here expands into a small bay, and on the one hand you see Quillebeuf, rising apparently out of the water, while the gray ruins of Tancarville look down upon you from a densely wooded height. The river itself at this spot is full of sand-banks, which shift from time to time, and are therefore extremely dangerous. You can scarcely ever pass this place without seeing the masts of one or more foundered vessels, rising, like gravestones in a churchyard, above the water, and serving for a memento mori. The grandeur of the whole scene, and these indications of death and destruction on the water, excite the same sort of awe which Nature produces in us when she allows us a glimpse of her sublime and beautiful mysteries.

Above Quillebeuf the river narrows, and the ascent to Rouen presents an ever-varying prospect, in which is to be seen at one time a hill of beautiful form, adorned by a church or a château ; at another, a naked rock, against which, in a stone-quarry, reclines the hut of a labourer ; now a pleasant village ; now an active little town, and, beyond that, luxuriant meadows and corn-fields. A trip by steam-vessel from Havre to Rouen, or from Rouen to Havre, is

an enjoyment that varies with every bend of the river. It is worth while to make this little excursion, even though one had to pass days and even weeks in the diligence to get hither.

Whoever has the option of going down or up the Seine ought by all means to choose the former. The whole passage then acquires a sort of dramatic interest. Immediately below Rouen, the river winds among islands of the freshest verdure. The whole country looks like a beautiful garden, in which every thing, arranged with exquisite skill by the almighty gardener, is refreshing to heart and mind. Rouen itself, surrounded by hills, with its Gothic churches, its bridges, its port enlivened by hundreds of sea and river craft, give to the introduction to the drama which is awaiting us the necessary gravity and a beauty sufficiently grand to enable us to guess the denouement, and to put us in such a mood as to enable us to comprehend the last act in all its force. Presently, the scene changes, and we are in a narrow valley bordered by rocks and hills. A quarry, a few cottages, a chapel, which tell only of industry, poverty, and the consolation of the unhappy, are at times the only traces left by the people who for thousands of years have gone up and down the river. A new prospect then opens upon us — a valley, a lovely, extensive plain, bounded by gently rising hills, shows us the ruins of the once powerful abbey of Jumièges, till the view again contracts, and we are once more hastening on between lonely hills and rocks. Below Caudebec the river grows wider; we

perceive more and more that we are approaching the sea; and the traveller here meets with a phenomenon, which in its way is equally grand and surprising. The people of the country call it *la barre*. St. Pierre has told us that the sea-god still pursues the nymph of whom he is enamoured twice a-day up the river. At every flood-tide, when this takes place, the sea rushes upon the Seine, at first stops its current, and finally drives it back towards its source.* The sea-god is an old sinner: he knows that the fair will not surrender, but that they must be conquered; and the meetings of the god and the nymph are therefore real battles, so awful and so dangerous as to draw into the abyss any bold inhabitant of earth who ventures to approach too near. A distant roaring, like that of thunder foretelling the storm, is the precursor of this terribly tender embrace; and it seems as if the nymph, the moment she perceives the advance of the god, is seized with a shuddering, for she begins to be agitated, and trembles for fear of what is about to happen. The scrutinizing eye presently descries at a great distance the furious billows approaching to the assault; roaring and foaming, they meet the current of the Seine, lift it into the air, and even leap up to it, grasp it, and drag it back in triumph.

* It would seem that the ebb and flood tide affect only the surface of the river, and allow its waters, at the depth of a few feet, to proceed to the sea. Without this under-current, if the whole body of water in the river were stopped for six hours, it must overflow the country for many miles around.

At first nothing is to be seen but a white stripe of foam, which, as it advances, appears more and more distinct, and comes on with gradually increasing rapidity, till at last it rushes, flying, as it were, upon the vessel, lifts it up, hurls it down again, and hastens onward. This phenomenon urges the water of the river over its banks, so that where we one moment saw a luxuriant meadow we behold in the next a watery waste; where a verdant island smiled amid the stream, the waves play with the topmost twigs of the willows, which look like floating sprays torn from the trees. Year after year this embrace, or this conflict between the river and the sea, demands a number of victims, for it envelops the bark of the too confident navigator, dashes it against the bank, or capsizes it.

Whoever has not beheld the sea in the omnipotence of its fury, may form some conception of it from this phenomenon; for here it hurls back in play a stream — its surface at least, to the depth of six or eight feet — to repel which the united wealth and strength of all the inhabitants of France would prove inadequate.

Such is the prelude to the last act of the drama, the denouement of which we see beyond Quillebeuf. The banks separate here, and form a bed many miles across—the bridal bed of the nymph and the god, in which they daily celebrate their nuptials. We have seen the nymph, and now advance to meet the giant god. At every stroke of the steamer's paddles the prospect widens; the eye cannot em-

brace the vast expanse of water, and with a feeling of awe we cry, "The sea! the sea!"

It is not my forte to paint landscapes or other scenery in writing, and I consider this as upon the whole an ungrateful field for an author, and where his readers obtain but a vague, undefined, and colourless picture. It is bad that, since the time of Walter Scott, people formally set about painting in travels and novels; but it is still worse when they lay on their tints not in bold, broad touches, after the manner of Rubens, but attempt to delineate every leaf upon the boughs, or cannot see the wood for the trees. The old adage, "Cobbler, stick to thy last," on which Aristotle of yore lectured, is still applicable at the present day.

If a country, a landscape, has only a mere interest of beauty, it belongs by right to the painter; but if it has also a scientific, a philosophical, an historical, an artistical interest, in that case it is our property. I would give a great deal to be able at times to write in colours and contours, and to paint in words; but as, unluckily, I never could acquire that talent, I think with the ancients, and in spite of Scott, Lamartine, and thousands of others, "Cobbler, stick to thy last."

My course led me to ascend the Seine from Havre to Rouen. Soon after you have started, and left Harfleur on the one hand and Honfleur on the other, you perceive on the right bank a small château, on the spot where once stood the Benedictine abbey of St. Gartain. The history of this abbey is

unimportant. In the church was the tomb of Harlotte, mother of William the Conqueror, who, after the decease of Robert the Magnificent, married Herluin, count of Conteville, the founder of the abbey.

Opposite to this spot, navigators pretend to have discovered in the Seine, when the water is clear, the remains of a village, about which they relate many wonderful stories; but as I was not in that part of the country, and have not been so fortunate as to meet with those stories, I cannot communicate them to the reader.

Tancarville soon appears more distinctly on the left, and Quillebeuf on the right.

Merely as a ruin the castle has an importance, and it is worth the traveller's while to pay it a visit, if he is tarrying in the vicinity. Its walls and towers are the representatives of ages. But as I am no more of an antiquary than a painter, I confine my attention to those stones that have a history to relate. In the northern corner of the harbour, before the new castle, there stood such a stone. It was called *la pierre d'acquit*. Till the year 1789 the fisherman was obliged to bring hither his prize, if it was *franc poisson*. On a plate of copper, attached to the stone, was engraved this inscription :—

" L'esturgeon pris aux eaux de céans appartient à la sieurie par en payant aux pècheurs cinq sols.

" Le marsouin doit deux deniers d'argent. Le saumon et la lamproie semblablement doivent aussi

chacun deux deniers d'argent, toutes fois et quantes qu'il est pèché aux dites eaux.

"De tout poisson trouvé en varech (on the strand) la moitié en appartient à la dite sieurie, et l'autre moitié aux trouveurs qui l'apportent sur cette Pierre, et peut on prendre pour ladite sieurie les dits poissons chacun au taux des juréz à céordonnez.

"Et s'il advenait qu'aucuns trouveurs des dits poissons ne faisaient les dits acquits des poissons qu'ils pourraient avoir pechez ou trouvez, sont et doivent être pris en forfait et les delinquents taxéz en amende par les officiers des dites eaux."

The Norman fishermen frequently contrived to make a profit by these seignorial dues, and never failed to bring a sturgeon that was worth less than five sols, for which they almost always received that price; for the fish was considered by the lord as a royal one, and too noble to be set upon the table of a serf. But whether they brought all the large sturgeons, on the other hand, is extremely doubtful. The *pierre d'acquit* was dashed in pieces by the iron foot of the Revolution.

The *tour de lion*, on the west side of the castle-wall, is called by the people *la tour du diable*. The devil had expelled the lion, or we should certainly have had a story about the latter instead of the former; and it was a shepherd of the Christian flock who dislodged the satanic intruder in his turn. The tower had previously been a prison, and was therefore well known, and in bad repute, throughout the whole country. But, not content with

stories of prisoners, the people gave out many years ago that the devil had taken up his abode in this tower. The chaplain mustered his courage, held a solemn mass, and then, accompanied by a great concourse of rustics from the surrounding country, marched in procession, with singing and music, and preceded by a banner, to fight a pitched battle with the devil. The devout spectators shrank back in dismay, when they saw the priest cross the perilous threshold. The combat was long, but as the devil is reported to be a jovial fellow, and to have a great dislike to water, he turned tail the moment his reverence set some holy water before him. The story is still told in the environs, with very grave look, and it affords another clue to the part enacted by the clergy in the drama of witchcraft.

Near Tancarville is a rock called *la pierre géante*, or *du Géant*. From the top of it, two hundred feet above the Seine, there is a magnificent prospect. You have nearly a bird's-eye view of the castle, and before it the Seine spreads out like a sea, while Quillebeuf is seen on the opposite shore with its lighthouses, its mole, its churches, and its masts. The rock itself looks like a prodigious roof, and overhangs so much that it appears ready to fall every moment. It is probably owing to this romantic position that even scholars have turned their attention to the Giant Stone, and made it a sort of altar for the sacrifices of the Druids. Popular tradition has attached to it a different history,

and relates that in very remote antiquity a giant dwelt hard by; that he used to sit every evening on this stone, while he washed his feet in the Seine; and that he outbellowed the tempest when storm-clouds gathered around his head. This creation of fancy is grand enough to cause Deville, the historian of Tancarville, to derive its origin from the North and to attribute it to the Normans, for he exclaims; "Ainsi c'était peu de donner leur nom à la terre neustrienne; les hommes de la Norwège devaient encore imposer leur demi-dieux aux rochers de son fleuve." We have too often had occasion to find traces of the northern invaders in manners, customs, traditions, and songs, to have the least scruple to declare our assent to the views of the historian. So much that is German has been transfused into the blood and the life of the French Norman, that the stone must not complain if a small tribute is demanded of it also. Nothing but the gigantic fancy of the ancient Germans has created such giants and baptised the Giant Stone. The Cyclops were mere schoolboys compared with the giant of Tancarville, or him who, near Goslar, shook a rock as high as a house for a grain of sand out of his shoe.

Quillebeuf, on the other side of the Seine, presents a picturesque view with its mole, which stretches like an arm into the river, to guide by its lighthouse the nocturnal navigator in his course. The town itself is at present of little importance. Henry IV., on the contrary, regarded it as the key

of the Seine, and had it fortified. His courtiers even proposed that it should be called Henriqueville, but in this case also history pronounced its veto. The works were soon demolished, for Quillebeuf had a different vocation; and the very first glance at the place, with its lighthouse throwing the whole town into the background, seems to indicate this vocation. The inhabitants of Quillebeuf were destined to be the pilots of the vessels passing up and down the Seine; they were destined, like their lighthouse, to shew them the way among the rocks and sand-banks which every where threaten danger; and they may be proud of their vocation, for year after year, they can produce an account containing this item: "So many vessels saved and so many men."

So far back as the history of Quillebeuf extends there were always in this little town ninety-nine pilots, and this mystic number is still kept up. When any of the pilots dies, the vacancy is filled by his son, if he has one, or some other aspirant.

The trade of the town is insignificant and limited to the wants of the immediate vicinity. The pilots only have any intercourse with the more polished company on board the vessels sailing past the town; while the rest of the inhabitants of Quillebeuf live aloof from the civilized world, and have therefore retained the manners and customs of their forefathers in greater purity than those of other parts of the country. All the Quillebeufers form, in a manner, but one family, and consider themselves

as members of it. The ancient hospitality has not yet lost its right. A practice that is universal here again reminds us of the northern settlers and of the Germans in general. Before a lad marries in Quillebeuf,—we have already observed nearly the same thing in Etretat,—he *studies* the damsel of his choice. These studies are of a truly patriarchal kind, like similar studies in Swabia, in Switzerland, on the Rhine, and in other parts of Germany. As soon as a young man has chosen himself a sweetheart, he obtains all those rights which marriage alone usually confers upon a husband. He visits his mistress as if she were his wife, and marries her as soon as his circumstances permit. Scarcely an instance is known of a lad forsaking his lass; and were any one to do so, all his townspeople would look upon him as infamous and treat him as an outcast.

Opposite to Quillebeuf, above Tancarville, the view opens into a valley in which you perceive the remains of the very ancient town of Lillebonne. Here are to be found ruins of almost all the epochs of European history. The Romans, the Normans, and the French, have contributed their share. Juliabona was the capital of the Caletes, who furnished 10,000 men for the insurrection of the Belgian Gauls against the Romans, in the year (of Rome) 679. Several Roman roads met at this point—a circumstance denoting the importance of the town at that period. The Roman historians of later times, however, are silent concerning it,

and we may thence infer that so early as the time of the Romans it had lost its former consequence, and that it was then, as it is now, a sort of ruin. Remains, two thousand years old, of a Roman theatre, and Roman baths, and the Roman utensils and coins which have been dug up, afford striking evidence of its early importance.

Near the remains of the Roman theatre lies another ruin, that of the castle of the counts of Harcourt, in which William the Conqueror once resided. Hither came Robert de Grandmenil, abbot of Auche, and previously master of the horse to William, who had been guilty of some offence—I forget what—against his sovereign, and had fled to Rome to avoid his resentment. The pope not only gave the abbot of Auche an apostolic letter, but sent with him two cardinals to effect a reconciliation. When William heard of his arrival, he said, "I will receive the legates of the pope, the general father of all the faithful, if they come to speak to me about the christian religion; but if a monk in my dominions dares utter an unseemly word, I will have him hanged ignominiously on the highest oak in yon forest." Such was the declaration of the son of Harlotte to the envoys of the pope, at a time when a German emperor was doing penance barefoot at Canossa. William was a resolute prince: to such characters belongs the world, which is sure to obey when any one has the spirit to say, "I will it."

Popular tradition relates that in this castle

William assembled his barons, when he first made them acquainted with his design of conquering England. The winds have since passed over the castle, and those walls, within which the fate of kingdoms was decided, are now the abode of the wise bird of Minerva, which muses and smiles on the vanity of petty mortals who boast of their achievements.

Around the ancient Roman theatre, around the castle of the mightiest of the mighty, now stand some hundreds of huts, ruins of to-day and yesterday, over which the tempest passes, and whose insignificance is their safeguard. That theatre tells of the popular festivals, of combats of wild beasts, of the blood of gladiators; yon castle speaks of the determined spirit and the pride of the Conqueror, and of the piles of dead upon which he erected his throne; and those huts of the hard, laborious life of the husbandman, born only to seem to exist, to aid the mighty to make history, and then to quit the stage.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Caudebec; beautiful View; the Church—Spring of St. Onuphre—Abbey of Fontenelle or St. Wandrille—La Maillerie—Ruins of the Abbey of Jumièges—Historical Events connected with the Abbey—The Enervés of Jumièges—William Longsword—Agnes Sorel—Superstition of the Inhabitants of the Environs—Digging for hidden Treasure—Legendary Tales—The Green Wolf—Duclair—Ambourville—Gargantua's Chair—Castle of Bardouville; tradition relative to one of its owners—Caumont—La Vacherie—Madame Dubocage and Voltaire—Heartlessness of the latter—Castle of Robert le Diable—Tradition respecting him—Wood of Roumare—Rouen.

THE ruins of Lillebonne had thrown me into a reverie, and in a few minutes, when I again looked around me, we had left them some leagues behind, and were already beyond Villequier—as high as which place old Ocean ascends in his amorous assault—and opposite to Caudebec. Vernet, the marine painter, declared that he considered the view of Caudebec as the finest in all France. It is indeed very beautiful, though there may be finer. The town is seated in a valley formed by the St. Gertrude, a small stream which here discharges itself into the Seine. On either side of this rivulet

rise hills of graceful form, clothed with wood. The Gothic church in the middle of the valley towers above the houses. The latter, at least those which face the Seine, are painted all sorts of colours, white, blue, green, red, and on the quays are alleys of tall trees and flower-gardens with verdant arbours. It would almost seem as if the town, having improved the charms which Nature bestowed upon her, now takes a pride in viewing herself in the mirror of the Seine.

The people of Caudebec, who had made a very gallant resistance against the English, were the chief instigators and actors in an insurrection of the peasants for the expulsion of those invaders after they had reconquered Normandy, and many of them paid with their lives for this temerity. The Reformation found active adherents at Caudebec, which was soon occupied by the Protestants. The revocation of the edict of Nantes destroyed the prosperity of the town, because the greater number and the wealthiest of its inhabitants emigrated to other countries, where they could worship God in their own way.

The church of Caudebec is accounted one of the finest specimens of Gothic-Norman architecture. On this point the partiality of the French for Henry IV. would be sufficient to drive all censorious critics out of the field; for that king is reported to have exclaimed, "C'est ici la plus belle chapelle que j'ai encore vue!" and I must confess that I dare not contradict the opinion. Let him,

therefore, who wishes to see what Vernet calls the finest view, and Henry IV. the finest chapel in France, put himself on board a steamer at Rouen or Havre.

Caudebec has now, thanks to the intolerance of the mistress of the great king, no more than two thousand eight hundred inhabitants. About half the number of its townsmen fell, during the insurrection of the peasants, at the battle of Tancarville, to which I shall hereafter advert.

In the vicinity of Caudebec there is a spring, called after St. Onuphre, the water of which formerly produced miraculous effects. On a certain day, young and old, male and female, bathed promiscuously in a muddy pool. Each of those who had any ailment brought a dry bough and threw it down near the spring, and thus a large pile was soon formed. In the evening the priest of a neighbouring church came to the spot, pronounced his blessing over the patients, set fire to the heap of boughs, and took care to manage matters so that, at the moment when the flames burst from the pile, a white dove was seen ascending close by. That this was the Holy Ghost not a creature doubted, excepting those who knew whence the dove came and whither it went. Provision was also made for miraculous cures, whenever they were needed for re-invigorating the belief in the healing virtues of the spring. Thus wherever superstition is to be fostered among the people, we meet with superstition at every step.

The monastery of Fontenelle, afterwards called St. Wandrille, was founded by St. Ouen in the 7th century. Wandrille was its first abbot. When we explore the ruins of Jumièges, we shall be reminded of Philibert, who, with St. Ouen and St. Wandrille, formed an intellectual triumvirate, which in the times of rude power, under the Merovingians, sought to diffuse the light of science and civilization. Thus, under its first abbot and for some time afterwards, this monastery was an asylum and school of those branches of knowledge which humanise the mind and manners; and here Wandrille himself soon collected a library that was considerable for the period in which he lived.

In the first years of its existence, this abbey gave to the episcopal see of Lyons two pastors, Genescon and Lambert, and to that of Rouen a successor to St. Ouen in the person of Bishop Ausbert. The conduct of this prelate, who, on the day of his installation, directed two tables to be laid, one for his rich guests, the other for the poor, who sat down with the latter and supplied them alone with refreshment, and who opened the treasures of his church to the needy, affords evidence of the spirit then prevailing in that monastery.

But this spirit of beneficence, of science, and of enlightenment, was not destined to be of long duration in this abbey. It was only as an oasis in the vast desert, from which stormy times soon swept all traces of cultivation.

Charlemagne strove to rekindle here the former

zeal for intellectual pursuits, for he had already comprehended that Science may become a handmaid to Power, and that her sword is often keener than even that of a Roland. For a time the schools flourished again at Fontenelle, and succeeding ages were indebted to the monks of this convent for the first collection of the Capitularies, which furnish a key to the plans of Charlemagne.

But under his successors the ancient ignorance, the rule of rude force, again predominated, and thenceforward the history of St. Wandrille is but an incessant series of priestly pretensions, hypocrisy, and depravity, opposed only now and then by well-meant endeavours to restore the original purity of the convent, but in general without success.

The last of the Merovingians, Theodoric, son of Childeric, died here. The curse incurred by his fathers discharged itself upon him. The justice of history often decrees that son and grandson shall make atonement for the sins of the father.

The Muse of history cannot pass even the inanimate stone without inscribing her lessons upon it. Thus those ruins of the church, which once resounded with the blasphemous prayers of an hypocritical piety, through which the winds now blow without resistance, and from which the passing tempest generally rends a few more stones, proclaim that there reigns a justice which is above the calculations of man. And within those monastic walls, where men formerly sported with vows which they called upon God to witness, and where now the

spinning-wheel and the steam-engine are at work, is written the sentence which condemns the idleness that deems itself called to direct the destinies of men here and even hereafter, and gives labour the right to turn it out of its possessions.

Before you reach Jumièges, the twin abbey of Fontenelle, you pass La Maillerie, a château in good preservation. The park and mansion are handsome. They were the property of Madame de Nagu, whom I have mentioned in treating of Orcher, and who was here, as well as there, the benefactress of all around her. She has raised herself a monument in the affections of the poor. Her name will live in the memory of the people, and her history will sooner or later be transformed into a Norman popular tradition.

Jumièges, whose ruins, still proud in their destruction, nod to us in the distance, is, as I have said, the twin brother of St. Wandrille. Its history, in regard to the pursuits and conduct of the clergy, is precisely the same: the names alone differ. St. Ouen, the confidant of Clovis II., was the founder, St. Philibert, the first abbot. The convent was much more resorted to than Fontenelle; for the number of the monks rose in ten years from seventy to not fewer than eight hundred.

At a later period, the same circumstances occurred here as at Fontenelle, and we find the same depravity among the monks, and the same occasional and transient attempts at reform; till at length, in 1330, pope Benedict VII. exhorted them at least not to

trample in public upon the monastic rules and upon the laws of morality and humanity.

Even in accidental events the history of Jumièges bore some resemblance to that of St. Wandrille. As the last scion of the Merovingian line expired here, so there another sovereign house became extinct by the death of its last princes. Charlemagne exiled Tassilo, duke of Bavaria, and his son Theodore, to Jumièges, and both here expiated a sin committed a century too early to lead to an independent throne instead of a convent.

The monks seem not to have been satisfied with this honour; for they afterwards invented another story, in which they attributed to themselves much the same part that they had played in regard to Tassilo and his son. According to this story, which became a popular tradition, Clovis II. had, besides the three sons known in history, two others, who rebelled against their father, by whose command they were *enervé*, and then sent for life to the abbey of Jumièges. This tale was recorded in the chronicles, and even perpetuated by a monument. The latter gave a great deal of trouble to antiquaries, till the simple remark that the two figures represented upon it are covered with mantles decorated with lilies, overthrew the untenable supposition that they were the sons of Clovis, because it was not till much later that the lily was adopted in France as the royal flower. The people, however, filling up the outline, relate that the two young men, after their nerves had been cut by command of their

father, were put into a boat without a rudder, with one attendant, a jug of water, and a loaf of bread, and turned adrift on the Seine. The current wafted them, in spite of the windings, islands, and bridges, from Paris to Jumièges, off which place the boat stopped of itself; whereupon the abbot received the princes and ordained them. They died at a very old age, after doing severe penance for their sin. The last circumstance, to be sure, was not in accordance with the tombstone, which represents two youths.

Besides Tassilo and his son, and these two imaginary *enervés*, the walls of Jumièges have lodged other princes and kings. The people and their traditions have preserved the remembrance of two of them.

The Normans had destroyed the abbey, and it lay in ruins when the second duke of Normandy ascended the throne. Rollo, on finding his authority established, restored tranquillity, and gave force to the laws. Two monks, who had fled from the swords of the Normans, and grown gray abroad, wished to die in the house where, half a century before, they had taken the vows. They found nothing but ruins and waste land where the abbey once stood, while all around the spot were luxuriant fields. They built an hermitage among the ruins, and became the pastors of the neighbouring country. One day, William Longsword was hunting in the peninsula of Jumièges, and found the two monks in their hermitage. Weary and thirsty, he asked them

for something to eat and drink, and the recluses set before him bread and water. William disdained this fare, and when the hermits told him that they had nothing else to offer, he retired angry and sneering at their poverty. No sooner was he gone than a huge wild boar rushed upon him and threw him down, but without hurting him. That this was a miracle is evident; and William regarded the accident as a punishment for his behaviour to the pious recluses. He went back, begged pardon, and promised them to rebuild the monastery, in memory of his wonderful deliverance from the boar; and he kept his word.

Another prince, whose memory meets the wanderer among the ruins of Jumièges, is Charles VII. of France; but the attention paid to him by the abbey and its historians is only as the satellite of a brighter planet. While the king was driving the English out of Normandy, Agnes Sorel had accompanied him hither, and resided in the neighbouring castle of Mesnil, where she died. Her heart was buried at Jumièges; her memory came to be attached to the walls within which dwelt her lover, who visited her daily; and it is rarely that a Frenchman passes the spot without paying her his tribute of gallantry.

It is well known how Agnes Sorel stimulated the imbecile prince to activity by her love, how she made victory the price of her favour. England was vanquished not by French men, but by French women, and the names of the two victorious heroines are

Agnes Sorel and Jeanne d' Arc. The former contrived to turn an enervated prince into a man, the latter to make an army out of a dispirited multitude; the one gave to the prince the will to fight, the other imparted to the people the power to conquer. The women of France have a right to be proud of both; and if there were but these two that became heroines in France, they would be sufficient to justify the gallantry of the men towards the sex. But the French women in general are more energetic, more independent, more self-sufficient, than those of any other nation, with the exception, perhaps, of Polish women. A German woman has a power of suffering, of endurance, such as the French woman does not possess: the latter is revolted as soon as she is no longer capable of enduring what surpasses her strength. Hence the new idea of the French women to claim the rights of men, since the men have begun to disregard the rights of the women, since they shift from their own shoulders, and impose upon them, burdens which they are themselves called to bear.

Agnes Sorel is as bright a phenomenon in her way as la Pucelle herself. She continued to be nothing but a woman, and conquered the English with those weapons which Nature had given her in order to conquer. Joan of Arc, on the contrary, borrowed of the man sword and helmet, became man herself, and put to shame all of that sex. Indeed, a woman must envy the former more than the latter; but men must blush when they think of the

Maid of Orleans. Joan received the crown of martyrdom, and Agnes saw the children whom she had suckled grow up; the one died on the scaffold, the other in giving life to an infant; the one is called "la belle des belles," the other, "la Pucelle."

The blunt, deeply moral peasants of Normandy, who could not peep behind the royal curtains; who knew not that every endearment gained by the king from Agnes Sorel was a fresh spur to exertion against the enemies of the country, recognised in her the mistress only, not the heroine, and pronounced their judgment upon her accordingly. Whenever they saw "la belle des belles" from the other bank, they hailed her in scurrilous epithets, after the fashion of the people of Caen, who shout to each other from one side of the river to the other. *S'engueler* is the term applied to this custom at Caen; the peasants of Jumièges called it *folerie*, *heulerie*. They were rigid moralists, the old Normans, and so most of them are still at the present day.

All these different recollections give a peculiar charm to a pilgrimage to the ruins of Jumièges, when it is considered that as an architectural work they are grand, that they are situated in a beautiful luxuriant country, that thus Nature, Art, and History unite to elevate us, and to give a higher flight to our ideas.

But the environs of Jumièges present other matter for speculation to the observer. We have seen that the convent, on its first foundation, encouraged

flattering hopes, that it promised to become a seminary of learning and science, diffusing around it enlightenment and happiness. Whoever has any intercourse with the inhabitants of the vicinity must confess that these promises were not realised; for in all Normandy—and the clergy were active every where in the same spirit, and here found besides a people endowed with a lively imagination—there is scarcely a district where such gross ignorance and superstition prevail, and where the people are so stupid, as hereabouts. I am quoting the words of Dechamps, the historian of Jumièges, and at every step you meet with evidences of their truth.

Digging for hidden treasure is a common practice here; and I heard of a village—I forget its name—where not long ago all the inhabitants laboured every night for a whole year with this object before they discovered the futility of their efforts. Due incantations always accompany such undertakings, and the old folks are still thoroughly persuaded that the failure was owing solely to some blunder in the formula, and that the treasures most assuredly exist, for the late Gertrude, who was a very respectable witch, had seen them in spirit and in truth. While digging, they had always several old donkeys in readiness to be laden with the treasure; for it is an undoubted fact that whoever carries a prize of this kind from the spot where it is found will die within the year; and of course it is but reasonable to employ an old four-legged ass to perform that task rather than a two-legged one.

The land belonged to the convent, and consequently so did the treasures too by right, or at least half of them; the danger was, therefore, invented to force the finder to apply for help, and thus make him betray his own secret.

When cattle have the cholic, all that the owner has to do is to go before sunrise, on St. John's day, barefoot and without being seen, and pull up two handfuls of corn-halms in a neighbour's field, to twist these into a sort of rope, which he must wind round the body of the ailing cow or other animal, at the same time repeating the first verses of St. John's gospel:—"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God," &c. The cow cuts a caper, and is as hearty as a fish in water, that is to say, when it is not ill.

When a person is drowned, and his body is not found at once, you need only get a taper consecrated, set it up on a board, light it, and turn board and taper adrift on the water. You may be very sure that the light will float to the spot where the body lies, no matter whether it be up or down the river, and stand still over it.

The whole country abounds of course in tales and miracles. One of the most striking of these is said to have taken place on occasion of the decease of the second abbot, Alcadre. Feeling that his dissolution was at hand, he became uneasy, not about his own death, but on account of the nine hundred monks whom he should leave behind. He was afraid lest the great number of the monks would

exceedingly embarrass his successor, and therefore prayed to the Lord that he might live a little longer. But in the night he had a vision. The angel Gabriel, or Michael, came to him and said that he was right, and that the Lord would provide for the future tranquillity of the convent. And the angel went through the dormitory of the monks, and marked four hundred and sixty of the most pious of them with a palm-branch, and then went back to the abbot and said to him:—"Be easy; all that I have marked the Lord hath found worthy to appear before him, and they shall stand in his presence in the third night from this." The abbot rose comforted in spirit, and informed them how short a time they had to live. All of them prepared themselves for death; and in the third night, when they were saying Amen to the midnight prayer, the sprits of the happy band were summoned away.

That an angel, the destroying angel of the plague, was the agent in this affair, is pretty evident. Now the plague is a scourge of God; the monks might not like the people to believe that the Lord at times scourged the shepherds as well as the flock, and hence the origin of this miracle.

Another of these wonders likewise points very plainly to its source. Not far from the convent of monks was a nunnery founded by St. Philibert. Whether the saint showed common prudence in placing the cells of the nuns so near to those of the monks is a question. At any rate, when the saint, after he had incurred the displeasure of his

holy friend St. Ouen, was thrown into prison and afterwards banished, St. Austreberthe, the holy abbess of Pouilly, was likewise exiled from her convent. Among other Christian duties, the abbess and her nuns had undertaken to wash the garments of the monks. A faithful donkey was accustomed to carry them from the convent to the nunnery. One day, a ravenous wolf fell upon the poor beast, and tore him in pieces without mercy. When the holy abbess heard this, she was very angry, and by her prayers she forced the wolf to perform the same office that his victim had done. She loaded him with the garments of the holy brotherhood, and, till he died of old age, the wolf was as steady and regular in his new duty as ever his modest predecessor had been.

In honour of this miracle a chapel was built. Time and circumstances pulled it down. A cross, "la croix à l'ane," was then erected on the spot, and I know not whether this has been spared by the hand of Time. But a popular custom, originating according to historians in this alleged miracle, and into which something of it at least has been transfused, still subsists, and would be worth notice even though it did not remind us of this story.

There are numerous fraternities within the jurisdiction of the abbey. One of these has chosen St. John Baptist for its patron and bears his name. The new president elected annually is called "le loup vert;" and it would appear that he derives this appellation from the above miracle. On the

23d of June, the eve of the feast of St. John, the new green wolf is installed in his office, and no emperor can boast that his coronation is performed with greater solemnity.

The whole brotherhood assembles for this purpose at the house of the old green wolf, and thence goes in procession to church, preceded by cross and flags, and each member wearing a cap in which is fastened an image of St. John. But the green wolf is covered with a green toga reaching to his heels, and has on his head a high green cap without brim and adorned with ribbons. At the head of the procession a boy in a cope carries two bells, which he rings without intermission, and the tinkling of which is only interrupted from time to time by the firing of the brethren. In this manner they direct their course to the church, singing the hymn of St. John. Near the ruins of the abbey the procession is met by the priest of the place in full paraphernalia, accompanied by his curates, the sexton, and the singing boys. A general salute is fired in honour of this meeting. The party enters the church, where the priest sings vespers. On leaving the church the whole procession repairs in solemn order to the house of the old green wolf, where a repast, which must not consist of any thing but fish and pastry, awaits the brethren. After supper, a large bonfire is lighted before the house of the old wolf; the lads and lasses, all in their best clothes, the latter decorated with ribbons, dance around it, till the brotherhood, drawn up as

before, and preceded by cross, flag, and bells, march in procession about the fire, singing an edifying hymn. When this is finished, all the brethren, with the old green wolf at their head, begin to dance round the fire.

The new green wolf, provided with a willow switch, lays it about the brethren, who, hand in hand, forming a long chain, again headed by the old wolf, run after the new one, whom they must surround and catch three times before he really becomes the green wolf. At the third time, they hoist him on their shoulders, run with him to the fire, and make believe to throw him into it by way of putting his courage to the last test. One of the persons present then strikes up the following song :—

Voici la St. Jean,
L'heureuse journée
Que nos amoureux
Vont à l'assemblée.
Marchons joli cœur,
La lune est levée.

Que nos amoureux
Vont à l'assemblée,
Le mien y sera,
J'en suis assurée,
Marchons joli cœur,
La lune est elevée.

Le mien y sera,
J'en suis assurée.
Il m'a apportée
Ceinture dorée.
Marchons joli cœur,
La lune est levée.

Il m'a apportée
Ceinture dorée;
Je voudrais, ma foi,
Qu'elle fut brulée.
Marchons, joli cœur,
La lune est levée.

Je voudrais, ma foi
Qu'elle fut brulée,
Et moi dans mon lit
Avec lui couchée.
Marchons joli cœur
La lune est levée.

Et moi dans mon lit
Avec lui couchée,
De l'attendre ici
J'en suis ennuyée.
Marchons joli cœur
La lune est levee.

I subjoin the tune of this song:—

This song, which is sung to the accompaniment of a violin, is probably as ancient as the festival itself, and as there is not the remotest allusion in it

to St. John, it would almost appear that this saint is a later addition, and that the festival had formerly a different drift.

After all the ceremonies have been duly performed, the new wolf receives the insignia of his dignity, the two bells, and then marches at the head of the fraternity to his house, where another supper, likewise of *maigre* dishes only, is prepared and served up. Till midnight the strictest etiquette is observed at the supper-table, at which the brethren alone are allowed to sit, separate tables being laid for relatives and friends.

The green wolf is a severe censor of the brethren, and obliges every one who drops an indecent word, or omits to use the designations and expressions prescribed by their rules, to pay a penalty. The moment the clock strikes twelve, all of them take off their caps, and the festival concludes with the singing of *Ut queant*, &c. All restraint is thrown off, the utmost freedom of speech and song succeeds, and young and old dance all night long before the door of the green wolf to the tune of a fiddle.

Next day a new festival is held. A large loaf, in the shape of a pyramid, is carried by the brethren in procession to the church, and there consecrated. Dinner, supper, dancing, and singing, occupy the day, and the feasting lasts several days, according as the green wolf is richer or poorer.

In these ceremonies paganism and christianity are mixed up in nearly equal proportions, and this is no doubt one of those festivals which the first

priests of the latter re-baptized, and which, though they might deprive them of their old names, they could not divest of their ancient usages and peculiarities.

But enough concerning the convent! The vessel speeds onward. No sooner have we lost sight of the abbey than we pass Mesnil, where "the fairest of the fair" once resided. Before us, on the right bank, is seated Duclair. White chalk rocks, covering the rear of the village, give a peculiar effect to the scene. It is asserted that one of the vertebræ of a giant was formerly found in the environs of Duclair; what truth there is in this statement let anatomists decide. But that giants dwelt of old in these parts cannot be doubted by him who regards popular tradition as indisputable authority. At any rate, the imagination of the people has given birth to such monsters; and if faith can remove mountains, how much easier must it be for it to create giants! Opposite to Duclair, near Ambourville, is a hill, which goes in the surrounding country by no other name than Gargantua's Chair. The name is all that I have had the good fortune to meet with, but I am certain that, if any one born under a somewhat luckier star than myself would take the trouble, he might trace out the tradition concerning this giant's seat.

We soon pass Bardouville, situated at the foot of a hill whose summit is crowned by an ancient castle. Many years ago, so says popular tradition, there dwelt in this castle a knight, whose lady was forced

by her family to give him her hand, though she had bestowed her heart upon another. The latter, resolving to bury his sorrows within the walls of a convent, assumed the cowl in the abbey of St. George, on the other side of the Seine, of which he soon became abbot. He had chosen this house that he might at least be near the object of his passion and breathe the same air with her. Here a German sentimentalist would have sighed away the rest of his life, but that air and that proximity soon set the combustible Frenchman on fire. An accidental interview with the lady served to increase the flame. Thenceforward he swam across the Seine every night, and forgot in the arms of his mistress that he was a monk, and that she was the wife of another; till at length the knight surprised them, slew the abbot, and shut up his wife in the dungeon of his castle. Down to the Revolution, the monks of St. George prayed for the soul of this abbot, who had died without absolution.

Near Caumont, on the left bank of the river, are a number of stone-quarries, a visit to which might be interesting to the geologist. At the foot of the hill is a little villa, called La Vacherie, occupied in Voltaire's time by Madame Dubocage, the singer, whom the poet called the tenth muse. Grimm, however, relates an anecdote which is highly characteristic both of himself, of Voltaire, and of the lady. "I was present at that entertainment," says Grimm, "and I can relate particulars concerning it which the heroine herself was never acquainted

with. Voltaire was cudgelling his brains all day to compose a *quatrain* for her, but to no purpose. The god of verse, foreseeing the use which he intended to make of it, kept aloof from him. Supper-time arrived, but no verses. The bard of Henry IV., in his despair, called for a laurel bough, of which he formed a wreath, and put it on the head of la pauvre colombine, en lui faisant des cornes de l'autre main et tirant sa langue d'une aune, in sight of twenty persons who were at table; while I, who believe religiously in hospitality, and who maintain it to be of divine institution, was sorely grieved to see it violated by the first poet of France towards a good woman, qui prenait toutes ces pantalonades au pied de la lettre."

Had Grimm left posterity nothing but this anecdote, he would have done enough to characterise Voltaire to all eternity. Frivolity could not be carried to a greater length than in this instance.

Voltaire was one of the greatest, one of the mightiest, geniuses that ever existed. He was more than a genius, he was a character. His blows were those of a club, which crushed what it fell upon; his thrusts those of a dagger, which pierced the heart. But Voltaire was heartless to a degree that even a Frenchman rarely is, and the circumstance related by Grimm is well worthy of the singer of La Pucelle. He aimed at destroying christianity, or rather the religion that has sprung up out of the doctrine of Christ, and he did destroy it in France; but he, like so many others, was the bear in the

fable to which I have already adverted. He destroyed in France not only the Christian religion, but all faith and every thing great that is connected with faith. He conquered mind; and interest, the grossest selfishness, have since been the ruling principle of the mass of his countrymen. The heartlessness with which he attacked what was most sacred, and made a strumpet of the Pucelle, and a candidism of feeling, have been transfused into the blood of the higher society in France; and, whenever that which is lofty, and noble, and sublime is spoken of in such society, it is, with very rare exceptions, with a lying pretension to feeling, which pains are scarcely taken to cloak. It is only from that portion of society to which these doctrines have not penetrated that any hope of a better futurity can be entertained.

Behind La Bouille is the castle of Robert le Diable. Few popular stories have made the tour of the world like his, and of late years Mayerbeer has thought it worth while to rake it up again out of the dust of ancient romances, dramas, and chronicles, and to send it forth afresh upon its travels.

The story is remarkable in a literary point of view, for it furnished occasion for the poets of various epochs, and of almost all civilized countries, to exercise their skill upon it. France, England, Italy, and Spain have their romances on the adventures of a knight whom history has overlooked.

In a manuscript of the middle of the 14th century, entitled "Miracles de la Notre Dame," be-

longing to the Bibliothèque du Roi at Paris, there is among other things a drama on the miracle of the Virgin Mary by which Robert le Diable was converted. This drama, which was published by Frère of Rouen in 1836, shows in its plan and conduct that considerable progress had been made in the 14th century towards the restoration of poetry, that poets had acquired a certain boldness in handling their materials, and that they had already begun to discriminate characters more distinctly. If there was subsequently an epoch in which, though the language was more polished, nothing was produced at all equal to the Miracles and the like, the cause will be found in the arrogance of an unbridled aristocracy, in the depravity and pretensions of the clergy, and in the struggles to which these gave rise —in short, in the calamities of a period of transition, which is always poor in the creations of poetry and art. It was not till both these bodies were confined within their limits, not till a new era began to form itself, that people could think again of those pursuits.

Besides this dramatised story, there is another romance concerning Robert le Diable, likewise of the 14th century, and in verse, with the title of "Le Dit de Robert le Diable." There is a third document on the same subject in the "Histoire de Normandie, contenant les faits et gestes des Ducs et princes du dit pays, depuis Aubert premier duc et gouverneur d'celuy." Rouen, 1558.

The stories of Robert le Diable have obtained currency among the people of Normandy, or rather

originated in their traditions. The people had been obliged to endure the cruelties and caprices of a Robert, they had felt the keenness of his sword, and they called him the Devil. These traditions still live among the people of Normandy; but the people is a more severe, a more just judge than all the poets by whom they have been sung. It knew only his misdeeds, and pronounces sentence upon him, and says: Let him be damned, damned to all eternity! And who can doubt that he is, when the aged people in the environs of the castle tell of a gray wolf that no marksman can hit, that neither snare nor pitfall can catch, and that appears at times among the ruins, with the howling voice of a wolf, but in human language, bemoaning his sins, while indescribable horror seizes all who are near enough to hear the appalling tones. Others relate that Robert sometimes visits his castle in a shroud, and that he is greeted in the vaults with the lamentations and complaints of his victims, that the graves of his mistresses open, and their dead bodies show their bleeding wounds to the murderer. Individual herdsmen insist that they have seen him in the valley at the churchyard, imploring mercy of the corpses of his victims, who always drive him away with fresh maledictions.

So far tradition—now for history. Historians have seriously disputed to which of the different Roberts of Normandy the surname of the Devil belongs. The appellation is generally attributed to the father of the Conqueror, though he is most com-

monly called *le magnifique*, and was, we are told, *benin et doux* towards his friends.* Others, and in particular the editor of the above mentioned miracle-play, claim the title of the *Devil* for the son of the Conqueror. No doubt that among the dukes there were more than one who deserved the title; but the Robert of the popular tradition was in all probability a knight, whose name History has erased from her book as a punishment for his misdeeds, and who continues to live in poetry alone, in order to serve for ages as a lesson and a warning.

On the right bank of the river is situated the wood of Roumare, the scene of the popular story of the bracelet, which was left hanging upon a tree untouched for several years, because the prince to whom it belonged had taught his subjects to respect the right of property. Whether this anecdote is true or not is of no consequence; for the people by whom such stories are invented make them merely to characterise their heroes. This story of the bracelet furnishes undeniable evidence that the people had, at one time, convinced themselves by facts that the Normans punished the simplest theft, and that they knew how to enforce right and justice; and as such it proves more than all the declamations concerning the barbarity of the northern invaders.

The view of Rouen gradually opens upon us; it is beautiful enough to exercise the skill of the painter, too beautiful for me to attempt to describe

* "Hist. generale de Norm. Rouen," 1631.

it. Every moment brings us nearer to the venerable temples of the city, and such is the force of their attractions that the speed of the steamer cannot keep pace with our impatience. At length she reaches the quay, and a host of importunate *garçons* belonging to the hotels rouse us from our reveries, and we find ourselves surrounded by the prosaic bustle of a French provincial town.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Resemblance of Rouen and its Environs to German Scenery — General Aspect of the City — Architectural Decorations — Character of the Houses of the Middle Ages — The Cathedral — The Church of St. Ouen — Women of Rouen — Place de la Pucelle — Monument for Joan of Arc — Reflections on her Character and Fate — Trade of Rouen — Commercial Rivalry between that City and Havre — Society for the Towage of Sailing Vessels — Projected Railroad from Paris to Rouen and Havre.

A SINGULAR impression was produced by my first ramble in the streets of Rouen. When the valley of the Seine, illumined by the most brilliant morning sun, opened upon us, after passing a wakeful night in the diligence, at the distance of a league from the city, a voice within me whispered, "The Rhine! the Rhine!" Not that the Seine comes up by any means to the Rhine, but individual parts of the former involuntarily remind the traveller of the German river; and, a league or two above Rouen, where the road from Paris descends from the elevated plains into the valley of the Seine, there is such a spot. The rocks on one side lift their heads aloft into the clouds, while a rich

vale, covered with luxuriant crops and studded with timber, appears on the other. The nearer you approach the city, the stronger the impression of the resemblance to Germany becomes; and when you have entered it, when the diligence is threading its way through the narrow streets, the numerous churches, with their Gothic towers, and the old Frankish houses, would almost persuade you that you are still on the other side of the Rhine.

After I had seen my luggage carried to my hotel and got the dust brushed off my coat, I sallied forth, without rudder or compass, to stroll at random through the streets. In Rouen, such a walk is most interesting. I need not repeat how strongly these streets, these churches, these houses, remind one of Germany. In regard to architecture and to the manners of the people, which are mirrored more or less clearly in these houses, those of Rouen are a real school, a collection of all the styles of the last four centuries, a sort of history of the art, the more interesting because other much more living and more instructive histories are connected with it.

Not being myself an architect, I shall leave to others the task of classifying these houses by centuries, and of pointing out in them the progress or retrocession of the art. Particular houses, to say nothing of the churches, are real chefs d'œuvre, specimens of as high excellence as their age was capable of producing. To these belongs especially the Hôtel de Bourg-Meroude, in the Place de la Pucelle. This edifice is of the sixteenth century,

and is embellished by a great number of basso-relievos, which, though much damaged, still excite the admiration of artists. A portion of them, in five compartments, represents the interview between Francis I. and Henry VIII., and, being nearly contemporaneous with the event, is important not only for the art in general, but also for the history, and in particular for the costume, of the time. It is to be regretted that the artist did not work in colours; as he would then have shown the splendour of the courtiers and attendants of the two kings, concerning whom a contemporary writer says: "Plusieurs y portaient sur leurs epaules leurs bois, leurs moulins, et leurs prés." Another series of these basso-relievos, in the compartments of an hexagonal tower, exhibits scenes of pastoral life, in which the bold gallantry of those times is perpetuated; for some of the swains are making extremely free with the lady shepherdesses. In one of these compartments the shepherds are seen bathing, in another they are toying with the shepherdesses, in the third mowers are cutting grass, the fourth represents sheep-shearing, and in the fifth and last, the pastoral gentry are resting themselves and playing *à la main chaude*, the game called in England hot-cockles; one of the fair ones clapping her hands over the eyes of a swain, who holds behind him his open hand, which the others slap, and he has to guess who struck him.

On another house, No. 8 in the Rue St. Romain, at the corner of the Rue de la Croix, are to be seen

a series of basso-relievos, which are likewise of importance for art. They bear the date 1576, and exhibit in seven divisions in the first compartment a school, and in those that follow Eloquence, Logic, Mathematics, Music, Geography, Astronomy. All these basso-relievos are cleverly cut, and each is perfectly characteristic of its subject. Nor are they uninteresting in regard to science, for they are probably the decorations of the house of some dignitary of the ancient high school of Rouen, and thus indicate the branches of learning to which the instructions and studies of the time were confined.

The great number of houses which are adorned with basso-relievos, arabesques, pillars, or other architectural decorations, and which, to judge from their appearance, must have belonged mostly to plain citizens, attest that the people had a taste for art, and thus form a strong contrast with the flat uniformity of the buildings of modern times. It produces a singular impression when one sees beside a house of this kind, gray with age and storms, the spruce finery of a shop of the 19th century. In those ancient houses are reflected the tranquillity and the gravity of the time. If great attention was paid to the exterior, this was not done at the expence of the interior. The windows were small, because when people were at home they wished to be at home. Within prevailed a chiaro-scuro, tending to produce a feeling of awe, because it served to ennoble the mysteries of family life, and left scope for the imagination. If the philosopher

who once said that people ought to build glass houses were to rise from the grave, he would no doubt suppose at first sight that his notions had made considerable progress in the last two thousand years. The fact is simply this, that people have become more shameless. For my own part, I never was a friend to glass houses, and I consider it as much more prudent to cover the vices and foibles of men with the mantle of Socrates.

The houses of the middle ages were small churches; the churches of the present day are large shops: that is the difference. Whoever doubts this, let him come to Rouen, examine the small houses of the 15th and 16th century, within and without, seek to apprehend the solemn tranquillity of the chiaro-scuro in the rooms, the gravity of the fireside, that high altar upon which stood the household gods of our ancestors; then let him at night travel by post to Paris, that next morning he may attend matins at Notre Dame de Lorette, Rue Lafitte. The thing will then be much clearer to him. The times, their ideas, their notions, their wants, are reflected in all that men do; and therefore every stone that bears any trace of its age attests the character and the pursuits of the men of that age. The temples, and the triumphal arches of the ancients, which oblige the poverty of our genius to imitate ourselves, bear witness to the innate greatness of the Greeks and Romans; and the gothic dome, to the mighty power of faith in our ancestors. And the present time! where is its faith?—where

its works? In July, Humanity roused herself, stretched her stiffened limbs, and the world creaked, as a proof that our time might have its works if it pleased. But next day the puny men shrank in fear from their own doings, and sneaked back into their shops and behind their counters, when a few stragglers of the great days stalked through the streets. We have become weak-nerved, and though we may perhaps be susceptible for a moment of a higher excitement than the hale race of the olden time, yet next day the overstrained nerves give way, and the whole frame becomes doubly relaxed.

Our time knows but one interest—the material—that which may be calculated in pounds, shillings, and pence, that of the shop, and therefore it is obliged to borrow from the Romans their triumphal arches and their columns to do honour to a so-called hero, and to copy their temples, if it will not worship, or rather annoy, the Almighty in a shop, like that chapel in the Rue Lafitte.

That must have been a great time in which the gothic cathedrals were constructed. And yet I have often doubted whether they were the triumphal or the sepulchral monuments of Catholicism, or, like most triumphal arches, both in one: at any rate, when they were built, the palmy epoch of Romish authority was near its end. The whole thinking world already questioned the omnipotence of the successor of St. Peter; and, though it upheld itself for another century, it was only in consequence of the law of gravity, which keeps a crazy building

together, till a single stone falls and the temple becomes a ruin.

The two principal works of Gothic architecture in Rouen, the cathedral and the church of St. Ouen, belong to the most remarkable specimens of that style which exist. The cathedral is in many places overlaid with embellishments, and individual parts occasionally detract from the total impression, and chain the mind down to the form when it would soar to God. The impression produced by the façade is quite magical. I often fancied, when I saw the uncertain light of the moon shining through it, that a marvellous conception of the imagination of the boldest bard stood petrified before me; and those rose windows often appeared to me like gigantic cobwebs, in which the storms of time had here and there broken a thread. I knew not sometimes whether all this—at least where the overcharging destroys the total effect, as in the façade of the cathedral of Rouen—ought to be called beautiful; but never did people express the idea, God, more powerfully, more awfully, more sublimely, either in figures or in buildings, than it presents itself to us in the Gothic cathedrals.

The church of St. Ouen is in a purer and simpler style, smaller and yet grander than the cathedral. It would, even at this day, extort an involuntary shudder from any *esprit fort*. One ought to pray either beneath the canopy of heaven, or in a Gothic cathedral, an image of the universe. But in the churches of these our times it is difficult to think of

any thing but the business of the day, the Exchange, and the shop.

The Exchange—yes, such are the temples of our age; and a temple of this kind has very recently been erected in Rouen. The architecture is tame and unmeaning as the idea from which it sprang; and I, should not notice it, if one of the few artists who strive in our days to gain a higher vocation from art had not chiselled for it a few new conceptions in stone. David, the sculptor, has adorned the façade of the Exchange with two groupes, which give a value to the edifice itself. Every body knows that David understands the art of imparting life to stone, and converting it into flesh and bone; but it is not merely with his chisel that he works; his mind takes an active part in his labours. It is precisely in this point that David distinguishes himself from the herd of artists of the present day. The two statues, or rather groupes, represent commerce and navigation. I need scarcely observe that the figures are noble, the grouping ingenious—for they are by David: I shall, therefore, advert only to the ideas which he has expressed in them. Mercury, the god of trade, was till now the god of rogues also. But David said, "He shall be just;" and accordingly he put into his hand the emblem of the goddess of justice—the scales. This is sufficient to characterise the whole work.

There is a particular pleasure in strolling through a strange town, where one knows not a creature. The fancy then has full scope; it can create histories

without fearing that one better informed may break the spell of poetry by the truth of prose. I have often kept my letters of recommendation in my pocket for two or three days, in order to indulge in this gratification; and I am the more delighted that I followed this propensity to reverie in Rouen; for I could lounge in the churches, in the streets, in the promenades, without being reminded of every-day life by a single *bon jour* or *bon soir*. On the quays, indeed, my imagination was more circumscribed, for there I saw the beasts of burden doing their duty, and that is extremely prosaic. There reigns during the day the life of labour; and it is only in the evening that the scene changes. The labourers gradually disappear, and where that class of people upon whom the curse of Adam seems to have pre-eminently fallen was just now most busily employed, issues forth, when the sun has set, and is tinging the whole country with his departing glory, another race, if you please, which, chatting, laughing, joking, takes exercise for an hour to make its rest the sweeter. The quays, the bridges, were covered with the whole of the beau monde of Rouen, and I enjoyed the sight, for many of its members were truly beautiful. I have scarcely ever seen in any French town in the high, the middling, and even the lower class, so many handsome women as in Rouen. I could not help noticing that they have in general light or brown hair, and very few black; that they have blue eyes, and that even the cut of the face was rather German than Gallic.

The women of Rouen cannot be sufficiently thankful to the barbarians for having made the ancient Gallo-Roman Rothomagus their capital.

I am a real friend to barbarians, and know not that I should make any violent opposition, if an unsophisticated race of them were again to come and attempt to sweep away the civilisation of our time, which gropes about in the dark. In the countries which the Germans overran they imparted new energies to the people, brought them nearer to Nature, and improved and ennobled the race of men; so that, on examining these, one may mark the places through which they pass, or rather where they stayed long enough to leave behind them evidences of their presence. The idea that the barbarians in the end rather promoted than obstructed civilisation must, to be sure, be a little puzzling to the philosophic historians of the progress. But this is the case only because those gentry believe, in their progression, that it is sufficient to follow their noses in order to reach the goal, or I ought to say perhaps, because they do not see the end of the progress, and therefore care nothing about it.

In the first days after my arrival at Rouen, I made inquiry for the Place where Joan of Arc was executed. I wished to see the spot where the heroine suffered martyrdom, and where, surrounded by the flames, she looked death in the face with the same courage as she had confronted the enemies of her country. The direction given me at my hotel

led me to several Places, through a market, and again into narrow streets thronged with passengers. I must have mistaken the way, and therefore requested an idler standing at the corner of a street to lead me to the Place de la Pucelle. He complied, and I soon reached a small Place, through which I had already passed several times, without knowing that this was the spot where the sacrifice was consummated. A fountain, with the unmeaning figure of a woman, is all that patriotism and art have devised to perpetuate the memory of one of the most glorious characters that grace the history of France. This monument produced, in the first moment, an impression the more disagreeable, because I had expected something better from French gallantry. Besides, I was disturbed by the incessant clack of the market-people and their customers, and so I went home with a heavy heart.

By the way, I was filled with indignation at the manner in which both French and English have treated the Maid of Orleans, and even her memory. It seems as though they felt that this woman had shamed them both, these by conquering them, those by teaching them to conquer, and as though their wounded self-love urged them to revenge themselves on her and her memory. A Frenchman, when he had taken her prisoner, sold her to the English; French and English priests pronounced sentence of death upon her, and declared her a witch because an English commander would have it so; and the knights and warriors of England

kindled the pile, and undertook the office of executioners. But the vanity of the men seemed to be not yet propitiated: and so one, who is now rated high by all, statues and busts of whom are to be found in every cabinet, in every shop, arose and polluted her memory. The house in which she was born has been turned into a cow-house; the tower where she was confined has been pulled down; and it has been deemed superfluous to erect a worthy monument for her, either where she lived or where she died. On the bridge leading to the Chamber of the Deputies in Paris formerly stood the heroes of France, who are now in the museum at Versailles. The heroine who surpassed them all was not among them; indeed, she would have put them all to the blush, not excepting those valets of the great emperor whom he called marshals, and whom we meet with at every step. How would these good people have looked beside this woman, who was of herself a host, who alone proved herself a man while all the men in France ought to have been put into petticoats! What need we more to account for the neglect of la Pucelle!

If I were an Englishman, I would, if possible, erase her name from my remembrance. Or, I would do penance, and, strewing my head with ashes, perform a pilgrimage to Rouen, and preach up the like pilgrimage in my own country, that the blood which drenched the Place de la Pucelle might be washed out by the tears of my people. For this blood is a stain in the history of England, scarcely to

be paralleled in that of any other nation, and the history of them all is more or less rich in such events. The barbarity of savages, the murders of the Asiatic association of assassins, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Sicilian vespers, the war of the peasants, and lastly the reign of terror, may be more or less accounted for; but this cowardly judicial murder of an heroic female is wholly unaccountable, inexcusable, a deed the like to which is never met with in the incessantly recurring atrocities of egotism and revenge, of distress and self-sufficiency.

There is but one more dire disgrace, namely, that of a Voltaire. It was not enough for him, in his hatred against priests, that the enemies of France had burned his heroine; he resolved to stain her memory. And so he produced a piece that is not to be equalled for filthy indecency, that attests an imagination filled with all that is vicious and base. The English and the priests had made a witch of the Maid of Orleans; it was reserved for Voltaire to make her a strumpet.

It seems as if that king, on whose head she placed the crown, conscious of his unmanliness, had blushed before her. For while she was tried and executed in Rouen, he remained quiet among his courtiers, and had neither sword nor energetic word to throw into the scale for her. Had the mistress of a courtier, a favourite of the king's, been in danger, they would assuredly have been saved by the threat of reprisals upon the captive English. For the Maid, the daughter of the people, not a hand was raised at

court, and only the populace of Rouen threatened to rise in her behalf, and had to be overawed by a superior force when the sentence was executed.

But the poetry of history required that the heroic career of the Maid should close in this and in no other manner. Her work was finished, her vocation fulfilled. France was saved, and it was necessary that her deliverer should die, that she might appear to posterity pure and unspotted, that she might deserve the goodly appellation of the Maid. It would have been a blunder in the plan of the pure epic if the heroine herself, the daughter of the people, had become at court among courtiers a wife, a countess, a princess, a mother. It behoved her to die, that she might be to all eternity a landmark between an age when the people were nothing and an age when they should become conscious of their strength. For thus it was that, when the chivalry of France was scattered like chaff before the wind which wafted the English across the Channel, a poor shepherdess, a nameless female, appeared and inspired the people with enthusiasm, self-confidence, and love of country, in order to be a sign of the times, a hope for futurity. She was the first heroine of the people in France.

And this the people have not forgotten for a moment. How it was necessary to keep them down by force while she was executed we shall see by and by. After her death the people celebrated her in their traditions. The shepherds, with whom she had formerly tended sheep, related that her coming,

like that of the Messiah, had been foretold by prophets; that for ages a notion had been current that a young maiden from the neighbourhood of Bois Chenu should save France when on the brink of ruin. They related to their children and grandchildren that, when this maiden was tending her sheep, the birds would come to her, pay her homage, and eat out of her hands. They then spoke of her divine vocation, and told how an angel had brought her sword and helmet, and devoted her to the battlefield and to martyrdom. But in Rouen the people asserted that, during her execution, dove hovered over her, and ascended with her spirit to heaven. The people pronounced her a saint, and called her la Pucelle; and this name is her fairest monument—perhaps the only one that is worthy of her. For a Gustavus Adolphus, a stone with his name engraved upon it was thought necessary, for Napoleon a slab of rock with an N.*; but the heroine could dispense even with the stone; the mere name of "the Maid" is sufficient for her, and is the fairest monument that ever was devised. This idea consoled me, though it does not justify those who deem a stone, a monument, necessary to commemorate their idols.

A few days afterwards, accident led me one night to the Place de la Pucelle. I had been strolling at random through the streets, till, on turning a corner, I found myself before the fountain and the statue of Joan. Solemn stillness reigned around;

* This was, of course, written before the removal of his remains to Paris.—EDITOR.

the bright stars glistened in the firmament; and the moon threw her pale spectral rays upon the fountain. Deep awe pervaded my soul, and long did I stand absorbed in thought before the image of the Maid. A celestial smile played upon the inanimate features—such a smile as may have lighted up her face after the bloody day's work that ended in her first victory. Her eye flashed with the fire of heaven, which blasted her enemies, shattered helmets, and overthrew walls. And beside her stood a lofty shade. It was an heroic poet, it was Schiller. Bowing before the Maid, his bosom glowing with affection and enthusiastic devotion, he presented to her a wreath of white roses. And beneath her feet lay crushed the serpents which had hissed at her; and here I beheld the pursy faces of the priests who condemned her, and between them the sardonic visage of Voltaire.

While Rouen was the capital of an independent state, it was at the same time the first commercial city of the country. After the conquest of Normandy by the French, the privileges of the city were confirmed: it retained the right of staple for all vessels passing up and down the Seine, and a great number of commercial privileges. The ships of various nations were compelled to land their cargoes at Rouen, and thus it continued to be the most important place of trade in Normandy. The revolution abolished these privileges. The wars

with England, which put an end to all foreign commerce in France, but encouraged home manufactures, caused the effects of this abolition to be at first not much felt. But after the peace, it was soon discovered that Havre had drawn to itself all the branches of foreign traffic, with very rare exceptions. The establishment of steamers on the Seine, and the *chalans*, large barges towed by the steam-vessels, then followed, and gave the finishing blow to the trade of Rouen.

The Seine between Havre and Rouen has some very dangerous places, and perhaps thousands of vessels have perished off Quillebeuf. Add to this, that the ebb and flood, extending to Rouen and still higher, prevented the formation of towing-paths; and thus the sailing vessels bound to Rouen, besides being exposed to the risks which they ran here, had to lie for weeks at Havre or Honfleur, waiting for a favourable wind. All these circumstances could not but tend to the disuse of sailing vessels between the sea and Rouen, as soon as the steamers began to run, and heavy goods could be brought up the Seine in the barges constructed for the purpose. Rouen then necessarily ceased to enjoy the commission trade between Paris, the interior of France, and foreign countries, as the barges can go direct from Havre to Paris.

This change of things was, of course, extremely disagreeable to Rouen and its merchants. Many of them, yielding to circumstances that were not to be altered, settled at Havre, and established houses

there; but many more, incompetent to take a just view of the state and relations of the two commercial towns, remained at Rouen, and tried all possible means to swim against the stream. At the present day, the mercantile class in Rouen is characterised by its efforts to restore the former state of things by artificial means; hence necessarily arises a direct opposition to Havré.

The old privileges are dead, but not forgotten; they still haunt Rouen, puzzling the brains of the merchants, and disturbing their slumbers. Whenever opportunity offers, they strive to recall them to life, but they will scarcely succeed in reviving them for any length of time, and their exertions can only tend to retard the general progress.

In 1831, M. Rondeaux, one of the most eminent merchants of Rouen, who had shortly before declared that, if he were but thirty years old, he would immediately post off to Havre, wrote a pamphlet, to show the expediency of bringing the *cabotage* (the navigation of small craft from one French port to another) back to Rouen. He strove to prove that, in the first place, the disuse of sailing vessels on the Seine had greatly diminished the number of French seamen; that, in the next, the direct transmission of goods to Rouen instead of Havre is cheaper and more advantageous to the shippers. According to his calculation, this advantage offered by Rouen amounts to many hundreds, nay thousands, of francs, according to the size of the vessels. In the Journal du Havre, this

calculation was impugned, and a directly contrary result was deduced. Leaving the task of verifying these calculations to those with whom they originated, I shall merely remark that, were they to turn out ever so favourably for Rouen, which is extremely doubtful, they could not alter the general circumstances detailed above which speak in behalf of Havre; for the difficulties, dangers, and loss of time incurred in the navigation of the Seine are of much greater consequence than a few hundred francs, as, in the time that it takes to go from Havre to Rouen and to return, you might make a trip to Bordeaux and back, or reach Marseilles.

The merchants of Rouen were aware of this, and M. Rondeaux therefore proposed, in order to obviate at least the risks and loss of time of the navigation of the Seine, to make the towing of vessels plying on that river a legal duty; that is to say, to obtain a law enacting that every sailing vessel on the Seine shall be towed by a steamer. The merchants of Rouen made a formal application to the Chamber of Deputies for this law for the benefit of a Societé de Remorcage to be established at Rouen; but of course it was rejected, as no civic privileges are now suffered to exist, but only personal ones, and these disguised as much as possible under the mask of the public welfare.

But the spirit once prevailing in Rouen, the remembrance of the ancient privileges of the city, the removal of the foreign trade to Havre, and the opposition raised in Rouen to Havre by this state of

things, continued, and found frequent occasion to manifest themselves. In 1833, M. Elie Lefebure, in concert with several other members of the chamber of commerce, and some of the principal merchants, formed a society for the towage of sailing vessels up to Rouen. This scheme would not have been liable to objection, had not its promoters tried to obtain and actually succeeded in procuring for it a privilege which rendered competition impossible. This privilege consisted in the importation of an English steamer at a duty of 15 per cent., payable in two years, if the vessel should not by that time be exported again. The purchase of the steamer was made merely conditional; nay, the merchants of Havre even asserted that nothing more than an agreement for hire had been entered into with the English owners of the vessel. There were already eight French steamers exclusively employed in towing the *chalans* and the sailing vessels on the Seine, but the above privilege put it out of their power to compete with the Anglo-French steamer. It is well known that all foreign iron pays a very high duty on importation into France, and that French iron is considerably dearer. Steam-engines pay an import duty of 33 per cent., so that the duty on a single engine is from thirty to forty thousand francs, and often more. The Rouen society had contrived to evade this heavy tax, and could therefore offer much more acceptable conditions than any other steam-vessels, which were obliged to bring into account the interest of that capital. The

privilege violated moreover another law, which forbids the introduction of foreign ships, and enjoins their confiscation.

The merchants of Rouen, however, could not derive more than a temporary advantage from this privilege. At the expiration of the two years, the society actually sold the vessel, and things have since reverted to their former state.

The spirit of the mercantile class of Rouen has very recently been expressed on another occasion. A railroad from Paris to Havre would be a great accommodation to foreign trade, now that it has fixed its seat at Havre; whereas, a railroad running from Paris no farther than Rouen would again make the latter city a compulsory staple. The merchants of Rouen have done every thing in their power to prevent the railroad from being carried beyond their city; to this end they have induced the most eminent mercantile houses in Paris to take the lead, and loudly insisted besides on the superior political importance of their city. The mercantile class of Havre, in the conviction of the necessity of a railroad from Paris to that town, never dreamt of the exclusion of their place from its benefits; till Rouen had so far gained the victory, that the plan advantageous to it was approved by the ministry of commerce and brought into the Chamber. Had the question depended on the minister, the point would certainly have been carried in the spirit of the Rouen merchants. But, as it rested with the Chamber to decide, the mere publicity served to

derange the plan of the Rouen merchants, and forced the adoption, at least in principle, of this condition, that the railroad shall be continued to Havre. The question between Rouen and Havre is, nevertheless, by no means settled; for the first plan was with cunning foresight so contrived that the continuation of it to Havre would have to encounter almost insuperable obstacles, rivers and hills, so that, if even the present plan should be accepted upon condition of the continuation of the railroad to Havre, the execution of that continuation will at least be delayed for a long time by the opposing impediments; and in the end it may be found necessary to have a second railroad from Paris to Havre.

The traders of Rouen, if not very rich, yet possess great influence by means of their manufactories, and the political consequence of the city. Their views, moreover, are directed rather towards Paris, those of the Havre mercantile men towards the countries beyond sea. Hence it is that Rouen gains so ready a hearing in the capital. Besides, Rouen, as a commercial city, is actuated by but one motive —opposition to Havre and the recovery of its ancient privileges; so that it can devote all its means, its influence, and its activity, to the accomplishment of this object.

Whenever a commercial question touching upon this separate interest of the Rouen and Havre merchants is discussed in France, it is necessary not to lose sight of this point of view, since it is from this

alone that one can rightly judge of what is going forward. Rouen and Havre are the representatives of hostile interests—the one that of commercial restrictions, the other that of freedom of trade, and its activity is displayed whenever occasion presents itself.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Manufactures of Rouen—Impressions produced by a Manufacturing Town—Factories—Treatment of Children; its consequences—Immorality of Work-people in Factories—State and Moral Condition of the Weavers—Hardships of the Working Classes—Official Report of the Wants and Income of Persons employed in the Cotton Manufactures—M. Lelong's Memorial on the Distresses of Workmen—Decreased Consumption of Produce with Increasing Poverty—Schools for Children of Working-People; their Insufficiency—Benefits of Machines; Enmity of Factory Work-people to them.

So early as the seventh century, Rouen was a manufacturing town; for St. Ouen makes mention of the cloths woven there in his time. It is now indisputably one of the first manufacturing cities in Europe. In 1823 it possessed no fewer than 95 spinning factories worked by water. In 1827, the rivers and rivulets of the department turned 2954 mills of various kinds. Among these were 1464 corn-mills, 223 oil-mills, 98 paper-mills. The number has since increased.

Rouen has given its name to a species of striped and barred cotton, which is known throughout all France as Rouennerie. The manufacture of cottons in general is one of the principal branches of in-

dustry in the department. Normandy was the first province of France in which cotton was spun. This was in 1700. In 1747 manufacturers of Rouen brought several Greeks to France, in order to introduce by their means the scarlet dye, then called India or Adrianople red; and they soon excelled their masters. The first machines for spinning wool were constructed in England, and their exportation was prohibited upon penalty of death. This, however, did not deter an English company in Rouen from importing the first machines, called little jennies, in 1776. These machines were gradually improved. In 1784 a *brevet* was granted by the government for a machine "d'une filature continue," and several were soon set up. In 1786, Vergennes, the minister, concluded a commercial treaty with England, which permitted the importation of English goods, and thereby gave the French manufactures a severe wound, from which they recovered only by degrees. In 1791, this treaty was annulled; but, for a considerable time afterwards, the manufacturing districts were in a deplorable state. The Revolution infused new life into the people; and so early as the time of the Directory this produced fine fruit; till at length, Napoleon, by closing the Continent, called forth the golden age of the manufactures. The Restoration put an end to it. England demanded, at the expense of the manufactures of France, the reward of her exertions for re-establishing the Bourbon throne; and Talleyrand, the most corrupt of the

corrupt, was not ashamed to proclaim that France was called to be an agricultural state; whence he inferred, to the advantage of her faithful allies, that England was to supply the agricultural country with her manufactures.

The government of that time soon perceived that by such a system it only made all France still more its enemy, upon which the principle of prohibition was again recognised, or rather retained, as the importation of English goods was never legally permitted, but had only taken place in the train of the allied armies. Thus confidence was gradually restored, and manufactures were once more thriving till 1828. Since that time they have again declined; and this falling off was attributed to the extensive contraband trade. At length, in 1829, an *enquête commerciale* was ordered, but hopes were the only results to which it led.

The Revolution of July found industry in a state far from satisfactory; and it is well known that for some time afterwards trade and manufactures were entirely at a stand. In the following year, upwards of 3000 operatives were employed in the *travaux de la charité* at Rouen, and a much greater number were without work and bread. Nothing could equal their distress but the heroic courage and the admirable resignation with which they bore it.

In 1832 better times succeeded, till in 1837 the effects of the crisis were sensibly felt. Upon the whole, however, the cotton manufactures in Rouen have been of late on the decrease. Labour is too

dear there; attempts have in consequence been made to found factories elsewhere, and their success at Marie aux Mines, St. Quentin, and other places, has led to imitation; so that these colonies are already beginning to withdraw her industry from the mother city. Whether this state of things is entirely owing to the high price of labour, the scarcity of work, the proportionably higher tax upon the necessaries of life by means of the *octroi*, or whether, as some maintain, it arises partly from the inferior intelligence of the manufacturers, I leave to others to prove or disprove.

In 1834, there were in the department of the Lower Seine 280 spinning establishments, which employed about 21,000 hands 21,000

In the workshops for the construction of the machines, there were employed as carpenters, smiths, turners, founders, &c.	5000
Weavers	65,000
Dyehouses	5000
Manufactures of coloured cloths	9000
Manufactures of cards for carding wool ...	2000
Total	107,000

If we add to these the different classes of labouring people and the shopkeepers, who live entirely by the cotton manufacture, we shall find that they amount to no fewer than 150,000 families, or 400,000 souls.

In every manufacturing town contradictory feel-

ings will arise in the mind of a reflecting person. He cannot suppress his astonishment at the industry, the endurance, of the people who here labour without intermission, at the intelligence that has regulated every thing, and that has made out of those thousands and thousands of hands one whole, one machine. Such is the first impression produced by a general survey, which excites only admiration and respect. A closer scrutiny of the details of the works of the great machine shows that these works, these wheels, are men, and a thrill of horror curdles our blood. The immorality of the factory-labourers is an almost necessary result of this state, in which the human machine learns to forget that it is man. Sixteen, twelve, nay, only eight hours of unintellectual, machine-like employment must by degrees extinguish the mind so completely as to leave nothing of the man but the animal part. Idleness is the origin of all vices, and the factory operatives pass their lives in continual mental idleness. The interior works, the mental machinery, of the man, stand still; the hand alone moves. It is a question whether this evil can be counteracted even by mental activity out of working hours, by schools, for instance; for these would not destroy its cause and its effects, and the very few who would really attain a higher degree of mental activity would soon be lost for the factories, and quit or perish in them.

The room of a factory in which children are employed presents a heart-breaking sight. The human

mind develops itself only when its activity is excited from without. External appearances lead to questions which it asks itself or others, which it answers itself, or which others answer for it. Without the external appearance, without this incessant inquiry of the child's, this grasping at every step after information, no mental development is possible. But, in a child which, from the age of six, eight, or ten years, goes day after day from home to the factory, and from the factory home again, which, weary in body, feels after working-hours no other want but that of food and rest, it is almost utterly impossible that the mind can develop itself in the slightest degree. It is a corporeal spectre, a body without mind. Indeed, schools are not capable of applying a remedy to this case; for it is not the school but life that develops the mental activity of the child. It would be a trifle to teach such children to read and write; but it would be a gigantic work to cultivate their minds; this, however, is not an affair of learning and teaching, but only of experience, of intuition, of the apprehension of external appearances, concerning which the young mind reasons with itself, and thus elaborates its materials. A boy whose life has consisted only in the alternation of labour in the factory and learning in the school, will, in a hundred times, not rise more than once above the level of the brute. Life is the school of life, and these wretchedly unfortunate children are torn from it, in expiation of Heaven knows what tremendous maledictions, to forget in the factory—nay, worse than

that, never to have a conception—that they are human beings; or perhaps to feel this for a moment, and to become, in the fury of their brutality, rapacious beasts.

But these are only general grounds; there are particular ones of a still more revolting nature. In the spinning-factories, the children are mostly placed under the adult workmen, two or three to each. This fellow, brutal, unfeeling, without a spark of mind, is their absolute lord and master. The slightest carelessness, which is attended with a trifling loss to him, kindles his rage, and is punished with cruel usage. Thus almost every spinner is the unrestricted master of a boy from seven to ten years old, and a girl from ten to thirteen; and very often the latter is not only forced to endure his brutal anger, but likewise to gratify his brutal lust. Lastly, during working hours, these children hear nothing but the disgusting conversation of their demoralised seniors. Such is their education, such their school, such their religious instruction. Oh! what would I not give that it were possible to prove me a liar, a slanderer of my kind!

You need but look at these boys and girls to see the horrible truth written in their faces in characters not to be mistaken. Unmitigated stupidity, malice, and sneaking vice, are impressed upon their features.

Neither does the body attain its due development in this preparatory school. The mayor of Marom took me to see a factory of this kind at that place, a league distant from Rouen. His son, six

years old, accompanied us. Health and childlike gaiety lighted up the features of this boy, and seemed to me to be a sort of scoff at misfortune, an evidence of their deplorable condition. He was both taller and stouter than the spinners at ten or twelve, and most of these were besides afflicted with scrofula, sore eyes, or some bodily deformity.

One boon, a cruel one it is true, but yet a boon, awaits these unfortunate creatures—an early death. Few attain the age of forty; most of them die before they arrive at thirty, and pulmonary consumption is very often the bridge which leads them out of this vale of misery. The work itself is extremely wearing; the hours, for children as well as adults, being from six in the morning till eleven at night, with an interruption of an hour and a half for breakfast and dinner; and in these factories there is in general a dust which settles upon the lungs and destroys them.

The females employed in them betray in every glance the most shameless immorality. I have seen there girls, whom, at their birth, Nature seemed to have destined to be handsome; and some of them still exhibited traces of this her intention. But the moment a smile played upon the beautiful lips, it looked like a blasphemy against that very beauty, and proclaimed the most impudent licentiousness; when the eye was raised, there burned in it fires that told of vice which could not reach a lower point of degradation. How could it be otherwise? The like cause has the like effects in this

case. The association of so many idle females—mentally idle, for indeed their bodies never rest—produces such a familiarity among them, that they have no secrets from one another. Each details her adventures of the preceding night, and thinks only of those of the next. The brutalized mind seeks pleasure after labour, and this pleasure is only that of the brute. Work is not over, summer and winter, till late at night; and when the hour of release strikes, men and women assemble in the court, or before the door, of the factory, and go off together to spend the few sous they may have left. A child scarcely ever knows more than its mother, nay, the mother herself very often does not know the father. One of my acquaintance once saw a spinner ill using his daughter, who turned complainingly to the by-standers. "*Le monstre!*" she exclaimed; "he can treat me in this manner! and since I was thirteen he has forced me to supply the place of a wife!" Enough! indeed too much! If I have exposed the wound, it is in the hope of directing to it the attention of those who have the power to heal it.

Where there happens to be a man among these human machines, he is an exception, almost a greater misfortune than the rule. These exceptions are gradually becoming less rare in France. And the cause of this is the education derived from life and events—certainly not from the school. The revolution of July, the insurrections in Lyons, the combinations of workmen, have shaken society in France to its profoundest recesses. The philan-

thropist cannot think without apprehension of the future destinies of manufacturing districts and towns, for their unnatural state will some day or other produce fearful consequences, unless the whole manufacturing system be totally reformed before it is too late; unless you make men of these machines, which are gradually beginning to attain consciousness, or can supply the place of men by real machines.

What I have said thus far has been chiefly the result of my own observation. At Rouen, a workman himself has raised his voice, and I will introduce him to the reader for a few moments. A weaver, named Noiret, published, in 1836, a small pamphlet entitled, *Memoires d'un Ouvrier rouenois*, from which I shall extract one or two passages.

Noiret seems, at least when he speaks of the weavers, to be a competent judge. He describes their workshops, "They are small and low, and hermetically closed like a coffer, that the dry air may not penetrate into them. They are generally dark, and so situated that the sun can never shine into them. They are likewise extremely damp, and part of them are real cellars; these are commonly preferred by the weavers, who are not aware how pernicious they are." It is a prejudice, he says, to imagine that damp places are fittest for the operations of the weaver, which require such as have a moderate temperature, and are neither too dry nor too damp. It is scarcely necessary to add that the most robust health would be destroyed in the cellars which he describes.

"The diseases to which, from their business, the weavers are most liable are scrofula, weakness in the legs, debility, and pulmonary complaints. The scrofula is produced by the damp places in which they generally work." They are mostly ailing and unhealthy. The above-mentioned causes operate so speedily that the voice of a youth of seventeen or eighteen is hollow and insonorous, so that a weaver may easily be distinguished by it from all other artisans.

Having peeped into their dwellings, let us follow them to their meals. "Part of the weavers live in public-houses," says Noiret, "but the great majority of them with their families. Their small earnings do not allow them to have wholesome, sufficient, and regular food. Breakfast frequently consists of dry bread, to which they often add a quarter of a pound of Neufchatel cheese. As their means forbid cooking for themselves, their wives and children go to the auberges, which are commonly called *gargotes*, to fetch a little wretched soup and boiled meat, or bad *ratatüille*." The French language of higher society has no conception, and I, of course, no translation for this term. The supper is much the same.

Respecting the moral condition of the weavers, Noiret gives the following particulars. "The weavers are industrious, and they are obliged to be so; for, even if they make the best use of their time, they must dispense with much that is necessary. A man is not disposed to take a walk, when

he has had a scanty dinner, and, besides, cannot dress decently. It is true that there is a certain number of working men who cannot refrain from keeping holiday on Monday. This ancient custom has unfortunately struck such deep root among the operatives in the city, that it will not be very easily eradicated. But, if people are not at work, they must be doing something else, and so they go to the pothouses to drown the little sense they have left in spirituous liquors of bad quality. Indeed, I cannot conceive how people who have nothing to eat can find pleasure in drinking."

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that in such a state of things a working man cannot think of cultivating his mental faculties. "As the wages of the workman are insufficient, he is obliged to work from fifteen to eighteen hours a day, and of course he has no time to improve his mind, nay, he never thinks of that, so deeply is he bowed down by his unfortunate situation; and to procure it for him, it would be necessary to abolish—of course, by degrees—privileges, monopolies, and prohibitions, as these crush industry, and increase the price of the raw materials and the necessaries of all kinds which the workman stands in need of; or, what would be better still, his wages should be raised beyond his expenditure, so that he might lay by something. Then, relieved from present embarrassment and anxiety for the future, he might hold up his head, know himself, and become a man; then would he see that, in a civilized nation, like our's, natural

talent is not sufficient, and that it must be cultivated if one would not sink to the level of the brute."

I feel no call to express my opinion here upon the means by which the state of the working class may be improved, and merely mean to exhibit the views of a fellow-sufferer. Let others examine whether he is right or wrong, whether he proposes a plaster only, or a radical cure.

Distress, necessity, here rend asunder the ties which Nature has elsewhere declared sacred. The father discards the son, and the son the father. "A detestable custom," says Noiret, "has crept in among the most uncultivated class of the working people in Rouen. When children have reached the age of twelve or thirteen, and often earlier, they make them keep themselves, that is, subsist upon their earnings, and so much the worse for them, if they do not earn sufficient, which is always the case. But the children, in their turn, repay the parents in the same coin; for, when the latter are ill, they send them to the hospital, instead of assisting them to the utmost of their power; and when they are old and incapable of taking care of themselves, the children give them up entirely. Through this custom, the members of a family are like so many strangers; and the children, left to themselves, have bad morals, which are transmitted from one generation to another."

This is horrible! Poverty, armed with the keen sword of hunger, stands at the door of the paternal dwelling, and prevents the children from crossing

the threshold to seek the protection of the mother who gave them life; and the same terrific figure stands at the door of the child, to drive back the distressed mother, when she comes to ask her own blood for shelter and protection, and a crust of bread to appease her hunger!

A life of suffering, of incessant toil, terminates in a beggar's death. "The workman," says Noiret, "when he is fifty, ceases to be sought after; he may indeed find employment here and there, where articles are made which are adapted to his strength, but for which a very low price is paid. He continues to work so long as his sight and strength enable him, and so long as he can earn sufficient to supply his most urgent wants. When he is obliged to give up work entirely, his last resource is a custom which has existed in the trade from time immemorial, namely, to call upon those who follow the same business, and to obtain from them some trifling contribution. The more acquaintances he has, the more he picks up; but he never has enough of them to collect fifteen sous a day, and then the necessity of running all over the city occasions a fatigue that is too much for his strength. A few are admitted into the *hospice*, but not before they are seventy, and then they are frequently obliged to wait several years till there is a vacancy. To them this *hospice* is a prison, which they are allowed to leave but once a month, and they are besides subject to degrading regulations. Hence, though at that age a man's spirit is broken, there are those who

choose rather to suffer privations and to retain their liberty."

Noiret then indulges in the following reflections: "In France, the aged and the poor who are unable to work have no other resource but public charity. It is not enough that they have vegetated for a whole life, incessantly tormented by anxiety about the coming day; they must, even when no longer capable of work, crawl from door to door to ask for that which is not due to them, and to die of hunger, and that too in a country which dares call itself civilised! If such be the consequences of civilisation, infinitely preferable is the state of savages, for among them, at least, man has no duties to perform towards whomsoever it may be; he is perfectly free, and can indulge all his wishes. I know that efforts are making in individual places to extirpate beggary, but this is not done universally; and, so long as no provision is made in France for the support of the real pauper, I adhere to my position.

"According to the public prejudice, the relief afforded to the indigent is considered as charity, and the government itself shares this prejudice. I would ask whether you conceive that you are bestowing charity in granting a pension to the soldier who has earned it by thirty years' service. Assuredly not, you will say, because he has served the country. Now it seems to me that a man serves his country when he is useful to it, no matter in what way. And, in my opinion, an artisan who has worked for fifty years together has been quite as ser-

viceable to it as a soldier who has been for thirty years under its colours. For if arms are necessary for the defence of a country, they are just as necessary to feed it and to provide for its wants. And if the working man has given his youth and his toil for the community, it is bound, on the other hand, to supply him with bread when he is unable to earn it, and has nothing left to procure it with.

"In regard to the ailing and infirm, who could either never work at all or but little, society owes them also a subsistence: for *in society not a creature ought to suffer hunger.*"

And who will venture, with those pallid figures before his eyes, those children thrust by their mothers from their homes, those fathers to whom their sons refuse a morsel to keep them from starving—who will venture to contradict the blunt champion of silent misery?

One might imagine that the working man, who thus complains of his own condition and that of his fellow-sufferers, had laid on too harsh colours: I shall therefore quote another source, which is not liable to suspicion.

In the archives of the Mairie of Rouen is deposited a "Report presented on the 15th of January, 1829, to the Sub-Commissioners of Inquiry, on the questions addressed to the manufacturers of Cotton Stuffs by the delegates of that branch of manufacturing industry, Messrs. Talon, Gambu-Delaure, Jacquet, and Lelong." It contains, by way of appendix, a "Statement of the annual wants of a

working man of Rouen, compared with the resources which he can procure by his labour during the same period." This statement is as follows:—

"WANTS.

2¼lb. bread, per day.....	45 cent.
Cheese or Herring for breakfast	10
A portion from the *gargottier* for dinner.....	20
Drink.....	20
	95 cent. per day.
Per Year.....	346 fr. 75 cent.
Clothes.....	60
Washing	15
Casual Illness	10
Lodging	50
Candle	6
Fire, one *foyade* at 50 cent. per day	26
For one workman, per year.....	513 fr. 75 cent.

If the workman has two children from seven to ten years old, who earn but little, and often even prevent the mother from working, the personal expence of the father is increased by at least one-third of the total ex-

pence, with the exception of candle, fire, and lodging.....	107 95
Total	621 fr. 70 cent.
If the children are under seven years old, so that they earn nothing and take up all the time of the mother, there is a further increase of expences by at least as much more	107 95
Total	729 fr. 65 cent."

" INCOME.

" The usual wages, 1 franc, 75 cent., amount in a year to 525 francs, so that the workman who has only himself to provide for may have a yearly surplus of 11 francs. If he has two children, from seven to ten years old, in the circumstances assumed in the above statement, there is a deficit of 96 fr. 75 cent. If he has two children, under seven years old, this deficit is increased to 204 fr. 75 cent.

" All these unavoidable expences are those of a workman who has no implements or materials to find. When he has to find a variety of petty articles, as is the case with the weaver, for whom there must further be taken into account the rent of a place for his loom, and the time which he loses in carrying home his work, his expences are increased 30 cent. at least per day, or 90 francs per year.

" Thus every unmarried workman has in this

case a deficit of 79 fr. 75 cent.; a father of two children from seven to ten years old a deficit of 186 fr. 70 cent.; and lastly, a father of two children under seven a deficit of 294 fr. 65 cent.

"Melancholy as the result of this table is, we must further remark, that we have set down 20 cent. for the loaf of bread, whereas it costs 24 cent.; that we have stated the daily wages at 1 fr. 75 cent., while they amount at most to 1 fr. 50 cent.—that we have supposed the workman to be employed all the year round, while many can find only occasional employment, and a great number none at all—that finally our calculation applies solely to unmarried workmen, or such as have but two children. Hence you may judge, if you can without shuddering, what must be the situation of a workman who has three, four, five, or even six children."

The Report then concludes thus: "Humanity therefore requires, as the first relief due to the labouring classes, the abolition—and as speedily as possible—of the indirect taxes and the *octroi*, which, if it is absolutely necessary, may then be imposed on the wealthy classes without exception.

"In presenting these painful reflections, in which we have been constantly guided by an ardent desire for the maintenance of order and tranquillity, let us take the liberty to add: Happy will it be if the too long subsisting misery of the great number does not in the end call forth dangers for those who have never acted otherwise than for their own interest."

Let me once more remind the reader that it is no

French operative, no republican, but members of the municipal council, one of whom is still adjunct of the mayor, who here lift up their voices in behalf of their distressed countrymen.

I need scarcely remark that since the presentation of the Report in 1829, every thing has been left just in the same state that it was. In December, 1831, M. Lelong, adjunct of the mayor of Rouen, and one of the members of the above-mentioned commission, drew up a memorial entitled, "Considerations on the Distresses of certain Classes of Workmen, particularly in the department of the Lower Seine," which was likewise presented to the municipal council, and is deposited in the archives of the Mairie at Rouen.

In this Memorial the author gives tables, showing the expences and receipts of the factory work-people, of the wages paid them for the different sorts of work, and those paid to weavers, and another exhibiting the expences and income of one hundred workmen in a factory with a steam-engine of twelve horse-power, for six months:—

"We see by these tables," says the author, in his remarks upon them, "that the wool-spinners are better off than the weavers"—the number of whom, not earning sufficient to maintain themselves, is calculated by M. Lelong at 65,000. "Nevertheless, out of 100 employed in a factory worked by a steam-engine of twelve horse-power, 60 are not able to procure the most urgent necessaries, as in six months they are minus 2094 fr. 74 cent. The other 40

have, on the other hand, a surplus of 2749 fr. 50 cent. But we must bear in mind that all these are supposed to be unmarried, or widowers without children, free from all incumbrance, and having only themselves to provide for. If each of them had an aged father, a wife, or daughter, incapable of work, one or several children, to support, how different would be his situation! I must also observe, that these calculations, already melancholy enough, are made from the wages paid in one of our best manufactories in the city, and if there are others in which equal regularity and economy prevail, which have as good implements, and whose arrangements are as perfect, I can affirm that it is not surpassed by any. No one can doubt that these circumstances permit the workman to earn more. In those which are not in the above predicament, the number of workmen who cannot earn sufficient to pay for the most urgent necessaries must inevitably be much greater. The smaller spinning-factories, the machinery of which is worked by hand, by horses, and even by fire-engines, which are liable to accidents that compel the work-people to stand still, number few or none that can live by the produce of their labour.

"Individual optimists may perhaps tell me that all this is not possible; that, if the produce of labour is not greater than is here stated, the wants of the workman are likewise not so considerable, or he must long since have died of hunger and misery. To these I reply, that in the expences of the workman I have included his lodging, which he does not pay;

his clothing, which he does not renew once in two years; the washing of his rags, which he wears in their dirt; that he sends his children into the streets to beg; that he himself, instead of spending 95 cent. for his food, lives upon one sou's worth of bread and one of potatoes, and that he gets his drink at the nearest pump.

"Let me then ask them, in my turn, if there are many domestic animals which work so hard and so long, which are so ill fed, so ill lodged, and if most of these unfortunate creatures must not envy those animals the very straw on which they lie?"

The author then shows that the consumption of all the productions of the country has fallen off with the increasing poverty of the working classes, and strives to prove that the merchants, shopkeepers, and agriculturists, are suffering from the same cause. He proves the inadequacy of workshops and factories of beneficence, and thus concludes:—

"The landed proprietors must support the government in all the measures that it employs to remedy this evil. They are all responsible partners in a great concern, which is suffering, languishing, and declining: it behoves them then to unite their talents, their efforts, and their sacrifices, not only to prevent great losses, but perhaps to obviate a tremendous catastrophe, which may perhaps advance with redoubled speed as the evil increases. Wo to society when, out of obsequiousness, selfishness, or want of courage, people flinch from difficulties! Have not means been found to give the emigrants

a thousand millions? But who has the better right to claim such a sacrifice—he who defended his country under all emergencies, without ever betraying it for gold and honours, or he who . . . .

"The rent of houses in Rouen, even in the most frequented quarters, has already fallen one-eighth; and it will not be long before a like decline takes place in the country. Should any one conceive my statements to be founded on error, let him confute them. But let me beg that none would turn away his eyes to spare himself the pain of beholding the deplorable state of our social position.

"If I were asked whether I foresee what will happen if things are suffered to go on as they have done for some time, I would answer, without reserve, that I think I can foresee it, but I dare not say what I see in the future. I shall only repeat that I have spoken of a volcano, which may open and swallow up those who have no foresight, unless France, the great nation, like a man attacked by consumption or any other insidious disease, languishes, falls, and dies, without a struggle. But this is not probable, not possible. A colossal giant cannot perish like a frail, weak creature. Before he expires, he will muster all the force of his wonderful muscles, and leave behind him traces of his tremendous strength. In conclusion, I say, 'Solve the riddle of the Sphinx, or she will tear you in pieces!'"

A startling denunciation this! The future here appears before us like an awfully dark thunder-

cloud, and the insurrections in Lyons were only the first flashes that burst from its womb.

Had this been written by a self-styled friend of the people, he would have been called to account for it at the assizes; for these friends of the people, *par excellence*, have too often shown that they love only one part of the people and hate the rest. And this hatred has parched and destroyed the seed, even the good seed, which they sowed, for love alone is fruitful. And out of love to all, we ought to take under our protection those who suffer, and show those who do not suffer that we are defending their own cause when we strive to relieve the distresses of one class of the people, that we provide for the future safety of the rich by bettering the present condition of the poor. But to pretend to serve the latter by cursing the former is insulting humanity, and perilling its interests: These, however, are not the most dangerous enemies of the existing order of things. It has more dangerous ones, namely, those who will not even acknowledge that the Sphinx of time has given the present a riddle to solve. They will have to repent their infatuation, if, as the author of the above Memorial apprehends, the Sphinx should become a ravenous beast.

Since 1836, however, the state of the factory work-people in Rouen has improved. Superior hands among the wool-spinners now earn about 2 fr. 50 cent., and though the crisis produced a stagnation, the manufacturers seem not to have been obliged — perhaps, indeed, as the insurrections in

Lyons made a deep impression, and roused the workmen to a sort of consciousness of their strength, they did not dare—to reduce the rate of wages, but only diminished the work, which, after all, comes nearly to the same point for the workman. The daily earnings of the weavers, on the other hand, are upon an average from 1 fr. to 1 fr. 30 cent., so that, even when they have constant work, they must be continually in arrear, and live at the same time in the most penurious manner.

But, if a momentary improvement has taken place, other circumstances may arise to-morrow, and produce changes, as in 1831. The wound is only cicatriced, not healed; nay, it seems as if it were only spreading further and deeper beneath the eschar.

But how is it to be healed? Ay, there is the fearful riddle! And then our timid homœopathic age and world, which recoil with fear and trembling from every radical idea, every radical cure! Were I acquainted with the means of solving the riddle, and to communicate them, the narrow-minded mortals would cry out, "Stone him! the blasphemer!"

I shall therefore advert to only one, and that the worst side of this evil — the children. In all the manufacturing cities and towns of France have been established schools, into which the children of the work-people are admitted gratuitously. But this measure has produced little fruit. I have already observed, that I doubt the moral benefit of such schools, when the children are obliged to work the

greater part of the day in the factory, and are there exposed to the brutality of a spinner. But the opportunity for instruction is not even embraced. At Marom, near Rouen, a manufacturing village of 3000 inhabitants, there are schools of this kind, and only three children of poor persons, and fifty of inhabitants in easy circumstances, attend them, though they have every thing gratis. The cause of this circumstance, as far as the poor workmen are concerned, is self-evident. They earn only just sufficient to support themselves, and therefore are compelled to send their children, as soon as they are strong enough, not to the school, but to the factory. These earn there from six to ten sous for sixteen or seventeen hours' work. Even this small sum the parents cannot afford to lose by sending their children to school. The community—consider that this is one of the points involved in the riddle of the Sphinx—might forbid children to work longer than half a day in the factory, and compensate the family for the wages of the other half, for the hours which the child passes at school. It would then have time to learn while playing, to go to the school of life.

Perhaps statesmen may not relish this proposal, and I am almost afraid that they will not. Let philanthropists then unite and do what must be done, if they would not have brutality combine sooner or later with misery and semi-consciousness of it to form a rapacious beast.

The greatest benefactors of mankind are the inventors of machines; and the inventor of the first

spinning and weaving machine ought at the least to be inscribed as a saint in the calendar of humanity. The savages, the ancients, would have made him a god, and I know not that I should have taken any great offence at the worship paid to him. Every manufacture carried on by hands is a cancer in society, which spreads, and corrupts whatever it comes near. Machines are the salutary knife which cuts it out. This excision is painful, like operations in general: it disfigures the part on which it is performed; and its first consequence usually is a wound-fever: but the wound heals, and the body regains its health. So long as all factory labour is not performed by machines, society will not be healthy; so long as a considerable number of the inhabitants of a country perform the service of machines, that whole country will feel the consequences; its citizens will become brutalised; part of them will subsist by the annihilation of the others, and the latter will found their last hope on the destruction of the former.

The factory work-people are the most inveterate enemies of machines. The first spinning machine brought from England to Rouen in 1787 was destroyed by the workmen in 1789, and, whenever a new machine was imported and set up, a fresh riot took place. Had they been but half aware of their situation, they would have presented a civic crown to the man who introduced it. But they are only sensible that they are themselves machines, and that they are partially rendered superfluous by new

ones. I cannot think that I have a hard heart, but I verily believe that, if to-morrow, all factory labour were to be performed by machines, and all the work-people were for a time doomed to still greater distress than they now have to struggle with, I should not be more pained than I am at present; for I should derive a powerful consolation from the idea that many thousands could no longer say, as Lebreton, who, though a calico-printer in a factory, has continued to be a man and made himself a poet, sings in one of his compositions:

La pensée a brisée mon ame,
Le travail a brisé mon corps.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Artisans; their desire of information—Lectures established by the Society of Emulation—Spirit prevailing among the Operatives of France—Anticipations—Efforts for the Reformation of Juvenile Offenders—Messrs. Lecointe and Duhamel establish a School in the prison of Rouen—Formation of a Society for bettering the condition of young Convicts—Success of its Exertions—Visit to the School—Awful Idea suggested by it.

THE artisans of Rouen stand on a much higher step of the social ladder than the factory workmen. The revolution of July has produced a most extraordinary effect upon them. In Paris it was chiefly they who decided the conflict, and persons of this class, coming from the capital, diffused by their narratives the spirit which had excited them to action there. This circumstance has upon the whole increased their self-esteem, and that is a benefit; for he only has any worth who values himself. The prominent part taken by the public press has also produced an effect A considerable number of the artisans throughout all France soon attached themselves to the different oppositions, and these distributed among them political writings, some good, others bad. The universal consequence was an increasing desire to inform themselves, to

read; and thus the artisans constitute at present the majority of the subscribers to all the cheap editions of the French classics. You may be sure of finding at the lodgings of most of them a tolerable store of knowledge, and a little library, containing Buffon, Corneille, Beranger, J. J. Rousseau, Courrier, &c. And whatever we may think of one or other of these writers, still we cannot deny that the money expended on their works is better laid out than if it were spent as formerly at the *cabarets*.

The desire of information awakened in the class of artisans was soon productive of this effect, that men belonging to the higher classes of society felt themselves called to gratify it, as far as lay in their power. Never was there yet any want of devoted hearts, as soon as they were seriously summoned to act by the spirit of the time and circumstances. Such was the case here.

In 1834, the Société d'Emulation in Rouen proposed to give public courses of lectures on commercial law, book-keeping, and geometry, and disinterested friends of the people came forward to offer their time, their labour, and their talents. In the first year, these different lectures were attended by 216 young tradesmen, artisans, and even a few factory labourers, namely, commercial law, 72, book-keeping, 92, geometry, 52: and the prizes offered by the above-mentioned society were gained by a tinman, a shopkeeper, a porcelain-worker, and a smith, in commercial law; by a porcelain-worker, a shopkeeper, and weaver, in book-keeping; and by a

cloth-presser, two young shopkeepers, and a last-maker, in geometry.

In the following year, 1835, two other courses of public lectures were instituted by the municipal council,—on natural philosophy by M. Duboc, and on chemistry by M. Girardin. I have frequently attended the lectures of the latter. The first time I arrived as the clock was striking twelve. I had reckoned upon the academical grace of a quarter of an hour, but I had miscalculated. The hall was crammed; the very stairs and windows were crowded with auditors, as if to catch the words of the lecturer in their flight. It was literally my lot not to hear any of them. Next Sunday, I went half an hour earlier, and found just one vacant place. Full four hundred artisans, working men, shopkeepers, and even elderly citizens, were assembled, and listened with a devout attention, such as I had never witnessed in my own country at the lectures of the most eminent professors.

The two lecturers on chemistry and natural philosophy published their Sunday lectures every week. Of M. Girardin's popular chemistry a thousand copies were printed, and by the close of the year there was not one to be had; so that the lecturer, who certainly undertook the duty as a labour of love only, made in the end a good speculation of it. While I was in Rouen, a new edition of his chemical course, of 3000 copies, was in the press. This single fact says more than any thing that I could add.

Individual workmen and artisans have been enabled, by the instruction received here to better their condition very materially. A weaver has been appointed *instituteur primaire;* a calico-printer has set up for mathematical master, and as such is sought after by the best schools in Rouen; a clerk in a manufactory has become, after a brilliant examination, surveyor of the roads in the department of the Lower Seine. I could mention other instances of the like kind, but these may suffice.

In France the desire for information is almost universal. Only furnish the workmen and artisans with an opportunity of learning, and they will throng to avail themselves of it. Not long since, one hundred and fifty working men at Elbeuf presented a petition to the municipal council, praying that it would make arrangements for public lectures on natural philosophy and chemistry to be held there, as they were in Rouen.

I became acquainted at Rouen with a journeyman printer, who entered into correspondence with Guizot, while minister, respecting the Sources of French History, publishing under his patronage, and who proved to him that the work of an author—I have forgotten his name—mentioned in the prospectus as inedited, had been given to the public in the works of Leibnitz, upon which this author was struck out of the list. Such an instance, indeed, is but an exception, perhaps an accident: on the other hand, the effects of the eagerness of the labouring class in France to improve itself are every

where apparent. The papers recently published a letter from one who had been a working man to Beranger, and the answer of the latter to the former, who, through Beranger's poems, had become a musician, a composer, and a teacher of music. I have already mentioned Lebreton and Kilbey. A cooper in Dunkirk has sung the sea and its shores; a cabinetmaker at Fontainebleau the forest and its ancient trees; a baker at Nimes, the ruins of Roman edifices in his native town; and a hairdresser at Agen, of love in the tone of the troubadours.

A new life pervades the entire body of French operatives, and this movement must certainly have some day a considerable influence on political affairs. That influence indeed is already active, and it is only the dull eye which is incapable of perceiving the germ till it has grown up into a tree that can overlook it. What may be the consequences of this metamorphosis of one of the most important classes of the people, it is impossible to foresee: all then that one can yet do is to call attention to the matter. Those who come after us will possess the means of appreciating both.

We have seen what a wretched life the children of the factory work-people lead, that they are turned out by their parents when very young, that they work as long as they can get employment, and starve when there is none to be had. Without any moral cultivation, it would be a wonder if a con-

siderable number of them were not brought annually before the courts of justice, to account for the offences into which they have been led by distress and by their moral condition.

From the year 1832 to 1835, 171 children were sent to the prison of Rouen, the Bicêtre; of these 61 were born in Rouen, 12 at Dieppe, 8 at Havre, 5 in Paris, 10 at Elbeuf, and the other 75 in different communes. The number is large enough; but it must be confessed that, considering the descriptions given of the state of the work-people in Rouen, the only wonder is that it is no larger.

These young criminals were, till a few years since, left to themselves, or rather to the instructions of the adult prisoners grown grey in guilt, as they still are in most of the prisons in France. When once they had crossed the threshold, on account perhaps of a theft committed from distress, or vagrancy, their destiny was fixed; they were marked out for the career of crime, which led a great number of them to the galleys. Between the years 1826 and 1831, 233 young criminals of this kind were released from the Bicêtre; 137 of them relapsed into their former courses, and 50 were sent to Gaillon, the central prison of the department of the Eure, or to the galleys.

It is grievous to see how long systems universally condemned as vicious can be allowed to subsist. There is scarcely a reflecting person in France who has not heard or read a hundred times that it is a real crime to leave young offenders to themselves or to

the example of practised villains; who does not know that it is a duty incumbent on society to attend to these unfortunate creatures, and to provide for their future welfare by education and habits of industry. It is nevertheless but rarely, and only by way of exception, that any thing is done to lead them out of the path of guilt. If one could survey the entire course pursued by the murderer till he became sufficiently hardened in guilt to raise the fatal weapon, we should find but too often, perhaps twice out of three times, that on society itself falls the responsibility for that crime, on account of which it at last inexorably demands the life, or at least the liberty, of the culprit.

All this is the more painful when we see how little is very often needed to alter, to amend. Two gentlemen of Rouen, Messrs. Lecointe and Duhamel, furnish a striking proof of this in regard to juvenile offenders. They observed their deplorable condition, resolved to improve it, and devoted a portion of their time to this purpose. On the 1st of February, 1833, they proposed to the gratuitous cantonal committee for primary instruction in Rouen to establish a school of mutual instruction in the Bicêtre; on the 21st of the same month it was opened, and those two philanthropists themselves undertook the task of giving the requisite instruction to the juvenile prisoners. From that time they were without intermission the directors of the school, gave lessons for several hours every day, and soon carried their plan for the reformation of the young culprits

still farther. On the 13th of May, 1833, they proposed to the mayor to assign 4,000 francs to the administration of the prison for the purpose of establishing shoemakers', tailors', weavers', and cabinet-makers' workshops. The proposal was adopted.

Instruction and employment were the means by which they hoped to secure the future welfare of their protégés. But it was not sufficient to transform the young culprits in the prison into new creatures by these two levers, if, at the expiration of their confinement, they were to be turned out into the world without protection or provision, and loaded with the curse of that prejudice which rests upon every one who has been the inmate of a prison. Of this their two patrons soon became thoroughly sensible; and so at their instigation there was founded, on the 26th of December, 1833, a "Société pour le patronage des jeunes liberés," which in the first year collected 2780 francs, and 10,199 till the 1st of June, 1835.

Messrs. Lecointe and Duhamel continued to superintend the instruction of the boys as before; and the Society undertook to provide places for them after their liberation. On these points I shall quote a few words from the reports of this society. In regard to the first, we are told: "The position of the juvenile prisoners is totally changed within these two years. They have a consciousness of good and evil; the instructions which they receive make them acquainted with their duties towards

God; they pray together, and devoutly attend divine worship. Almost all of them can read, write, and cipher; the rest of their time is devoted to the learning of a trade, and several of these youths have been placed out as journeymen and are earning their living."

With respect to the providing of places for the offenders on their release, the report of the Society for 1835 says, "The two-fold remark—that young criminals are more numerous in manufacturing towns than in agricultural districts, and that greater morality prevails in the latter—has led us to perceive that the young convicts on their liberation ought as much as possible to be employed in agriculture, that they may be the less exposed to bad company, and become habituated to an industrious life. But an impediment that is frequently met with prevented the execution of this plan.

"The majority of these convicts have been from their youth left to themselves; they have had to endure all the consequences of indigence, and their physical powers have suffered. You would be in general mistaken if you were to estimate their age from their personal appearance. Others prefer less laborious occupations, and we are obliged to give way to their inclinations on this point, as it would not be advisable to change their vocation.

"The prejudice which rejects the liberated convicts is likewise deeply rooted. How many refusals have we not met with! How many are there who entertain philanthropic sentiments in theory and

deny them in practice! This disposition, however, has neither surprised nor deterred us.

"But if we have experienced many refusals, we must, on the other hand, do justice to the humane disposition of those who have accepted our proposals. Artisans little favoured by fortune were generous and confiding; our convicts, admitted to the domestic hearth, became children of the family; they here found good advice, and the best instruction for practising their trade. One of these artisans said to us with emotion, 'I was myself a forlorn orphan without resources. A benevolent man took pity on my situation; he generously taught me his trade, and it is no doubt owing to him that I have become a good citizen and a good father. I will now repay what he gave me.' He has kept his word, and trained a clever workman, whose livelihood is secured and whose conduct is exemplary."

Farther on the report says, "Wherever it has been possible, we have endeavoured to re-knit family ties. Thus many children have been given back to their parents, and their position secured by means of succours cautiously granted."

Thus instruction, work, the habitude of it, a trade, and, as far as possible, a secured livelihood, are the means employed to give back the young convicts to society, and to guard them against a relapse. The results for a number of years have been as follows:—

In the Year	Released Juvenile Convicts.	Relapsed. Once.	Twice.	Thrice	4 times	Sent to the Galleys, or to the Central Prison of the Department of l'Eure.	Total of Relapses.
1826	16	5	3	3	2		
1827	23	7	3	2	1		
1828	20	5	—	1	—		
1829	25	5	4	2	3		
1830	20	6	1	1	—		
1831	29	6	2	1	1		
	133	34	16	10	7	50	117
For the Years 1833 to 1835.							
1833	38	3	—	—	—		
1834	36	5	2	—	—		
1835	47	6	—	1	—		
	121	14	2	1	—	—	17

Thus while, in the years 1826-1831, out of 133 young convicts who were released, 117 relapsed, after the opening of the school and the institution of the Société pour le Patronage, there were only 17 relapses out of 121 released convicts. This might almost be called a wonderful result, but it is a perfectly natural one, and the only wonderful part of the matter is that there are perhaps persons to be found who will wonder at it.

M. Duhamel had the kindness to take me to the prison to see his school and his pupils. I have a secret horror of every place that is called a prison, and when the lock of the first door was turned upon me, my blood ran cold. Nothing but the certain hope of finding in one of those prisons, which have hitherto been only a disgrace to society, an institution worthy of man and of humanity, enabled me to conquer my inward repugnance. Five or six other

doors opened to admit us, and were locked again when we had passed, before we reached the quarters of the children. These were just at dinner. From sixty to seventy boys, apparently from ten to fifteen years old, were seated at two long tables. At the extremity of these two tables was a third, at which sat three boys. All were dressed in dark gray jackets and trowsers, a cap, and wooden shoes. The three boys at the small table, which overlooked the other two, were the serjeant-major and two serjeants. The other convicts were divided into small parties, each of which had a corporal or serjeant at its head; and the serjeants and corporals had the distinction usual among soldiers, a linen or silver stripe on the sleeve.

When we entered, all rose without leaving their places. But in the way in which all of them, in chorus, greeted their benefactor with "Bon jour, Monsieur Duhamel," there was such a respectful familiarity as I have very rarely witnessed. This salutation did my heart good, and it would have sufficed to convince me that a great deal is done here for the welfare of these children.

They had nearly finished dinner when we entered. All of them still had upon their plates some wholesome-looking meat and vegetables. Whether they have meat every day I cannot tell, though I believe M. Duhamel did inform me. It was the moral result only that I was interested about.

When they had done dinner, the serjeant-major began a simple, but on that account the more im-

pressive, prayer, which the other boys devoutly pronounced after him. The young commander then gave orders for leaving the dining-room. His subordinates, the serjeants and corporals, repeated the word of command, and the little troop left the hall in military step. In this manner, they marched through the first court into a larger, where they drew up at the command of their leaders. Here each corporal examined his division, ascertained whether clothes and shoes were in a good state, whether hands and faces were duly washed, and noted down any rent in jacket or trowsers, and any neglect of cleanliness. At length the commander ordered them to break their ranks, on which the lads were allowed to walk about in the court for half an hour, which they did three, four, or five, arm-in-arm together. One of the serjeants, *l'officier du jour*, retained the superintendence, in order to prevent any thing improper.

I must confess that at the first moment this military system made a disagreeable impression, though I was not disposed to find fault. I had seen something of the sort in private schools, and there found this apish mimickry as contemptible and unpractical as possible. To make military puppets of children is a mortal sin, a relic of the Napoleon mania, which is far from being entirely banished from France. But here, in the prison, on further consideration, the thing did not appear so unpractical. The greater number of these boys were vagabonds, accustomed to the most disorderly and irre-

gular life. To habituate them to order, regularity, and cleanliness, is certainly one of the most difficult tasks of their teachers, and I believe that it would not be easy for them to devise any better way of accomplishing this object than to subject the pupils to strict military discipline, though, in some respects, it is certainly liable to objection.

When the time for recreation was over, the voice of the serjeant-major called the convicts again into rank and file, and they marched to the school-room. I need not enter into the mode of proceeding in a school of mutual instruction. The convicts here learned reading, writing, and arithmetic, and a considerable number of them had already arrived at a degree of perfection in those three branches of instruction, which is rarely attained, and scarcely ever surpassed, in the lower schools.

For the improvement of their morals they receive religious instruction; but the principal point, after all, consists in the daily admonitions of their philanthropic teachers, in employment, in the instruction itself, in order, and, lastly, in the gradually-awakening consciousness that they are no longer abandoned by God and the world, and in the knowledge of the sacrifices that worthy men are making for them. The good conduct of the convicts procures them the different ranks of serjeant-major, serjeant, and corporal, by which their youthful ambition is soon kindled, and they are impelled to better courses. Lastly, the Society, from time to time, makes the best, most diligent, and best-behaved scholars a

present in money of 50 or 25 francs, which is deposited for them in the savings' chest.

Before I left the prison, I went with M. Duhamel to see the brushmakers' workshops, where the boys work after school-hours under the direction of a master from the city; for, of course, the young convicts are kept as much apart as possible from the other prisoners.

I must own that I have seldom visited a public institution from which I have carried home with me a feeling of such profound satisfaction. It not only did my heart good to think that so many unfortunate creatures were here regained for society, but perhaps, in a still greater degree, that the good-will of two excellent men was sufficient to produce this result. The first step only is difficult, and costs sacrifices; this once taken, all is accomplished, and the rest is only a question of earlier or later. Messrs. Lecointe and Duhamel formed the plan of bettering the condition of the young convicts, and because they set about the work in good earnest their efforts were successful. They became themselves the teachers of the prisoners, and the results from this beginning followed almost without any exertion. Workshops were established, and a Society instituted to provide for the future subsistence of the convicts.

Thus all that could well be done has been performed for the department of the Lower Seine, and there needs but another step to communicate the benefits of similar institutions to all France. For

this effect, indeed, the powers of an individual are inadequate; but when we see that the Society for the Patronage of Juvenile Convicts is applying to the government for the erection of central prisons for its protégés throughout all France, and that this application is founded on the most incontestable, the most triumphant results; if the speedy establishment of such central institutions is no longer doubtful; it is the more evident that a public benefit, if but a single individual sets in good earnest about effecting it in his own limited sphere, will soon force itself into general notice and adoption. Mark this well, ye philanthropists!

On my way home, I passed a factory, which I had visited on the preceding day, and there a new idea darted across my mind. It was this: It is evident then that a factory workman in Rouen, if he loves his children and has their welfare at heart, must say to them: "Go and steal!" Shocking! and the truer the more shocking. Is it not as if man is forced to show his neighbour by deeds that he has it in his power to do him an injury before that neighbour will give himself any concern about him? In Rouen, there are thousands of children of working people who are turned adrift in the world without any instruction, who share hunger and cold with their parents, whose bodies and souls are alike ruined by the most unnatural toil from their earliest youth. Not a creature cares about them. Not till the moment that they become criminals does the community deem them worthy of notice, and

then in general only to subject them to the rigour of the law, but here in Rouen—thanks to the interference of the humane—to treat them kindly, to instruct them, to give them a trade, and to provide for their future welfare. In France, you may frequently hear of persons who commit some petty offence, that they may find in prison a protection from cold and hunger; and if there should really be erected all over the country institutions for the support and instruction of juvenile criminals, it would be very extraordinary if, by and by, fathers did not say to their children: "I love you, and, because I love you, I desire you to steal!"

So long as the community does not attack the root of the evil, so long as it does not strive, instead of healing external ulcers, to purify the juices of the body, so long will it be affected by local complaints of that kind. But from the day that society, instead of providing for juvenile offenders, shall take under its protection the juvenile non-offenders, who have the misfortune to be marked by the stamp of its wrath as future pupils of criminal schools, shall instruct them, keep them to work, and provide for their future welfare, from that day criminal schools must be superfluous. And "to this complexion must it come at last."—The Sphinx! the Sphinx!

CHAPTER XXX.

Spirit of the People of Rouen—Antiquity of the City—Piety of its Ancient Inhabitants—Society for building and finishing Churches—Fraternity of the Immaculate Conception—Legend of an Adulterous Canon—Prizes for Compositions on the Immaculate Conception—The Privilege of St. Romain—Right assumed by the Clergy to save one capital Convict every year—Ceremonies observed on the occasion—Popular Almanacs—La Bibliothèque bleue—The Lovers' Catechism—Catechism of Marriageable Girls—General Character of the People in and around Rouen.

A HOUSE, four walls, a door, two or three windows and a roof—a street, a double row of houses—neither more nor less. And yet, only cast your eyes on these stone and wooden coffins of the living, only stroll through a street, and you know, or can at least guess, of what spirit the inmates are the offspring. If Rouen reminds us of the old German imperial cities, this resemblance is not merely external; the people, who dwell and still dwell in those houses, who traverse those streets, are much alike in both. The spirit of commerce is that of a free imperial city, which, after the lapse of ages, cannot forget that it once belonged to the great German Hansa;

that of Cologne, for instance, which a few years since exerted itself to the utmost to prevent the loss of its right of staple. The citizen of Rouen is a *bon-vivant* too, though the Frenchman in general is no match in this respect for a burgher of Frankfurt, Munich, or Vienna. A dinner in Rouen is a real affair of state; and there is in that city a regular cramming season, during which all the gossips of both sexes give invitations to one another. Thirty dishes for eight or ten persons, and twenty-four for dessert, are a mere bagatelle.

Cologne was formerly called "the Holy City," and Rouen, "la Ville de la Vierge." In Cologne, there were as many churches as days in the year; in Rouen, just one hundred years ago, there were sixty-one churches and chapels, and forty-eight convents of monks and nuns. The inhabitants of Rouen, like the Normans in general, were extremely pious. We find in their history at every step traces of their catholic sentiments.

In the middle of the twelfth century, an association was formed at Chartres for building new churches, and completing such as were begun; and this masonic fraternity found in Normandy a more cordial response than any where else. In all the towns and in every village it met with willing helpmates. Men and women joined it, confessed and communicated, forgave their enemies and asked their forgiveness, before they were admitted into the society. The superior of the brotherhood gave directions where they were to work and what they

were to do. Accordingly, great and small, rich and poor, male and female, harnessed themselves to the cars, and, singing hymns, and regardless of storms and weather, drew them, laden with stones and timber, with which the masons and carpenters erected gothic churches, the offspring and witnesses of that enthusiasm, the tombstones of Catholicism. The archbishop gave his blessing to all who joined the fraternity, and the people told of miracles which attested the power of this benediction. The people, the great mass, were still stanch believers; but the more knowing, the masons, the masters, guessed already what was to happen. And they chiselled their doubts upon the cathedral itself, in those bold figures which we meet with in almost all gothic churches, and which satirised the dissolute lives of the monks and nuns.

This enthusiasm was the last flickering of the flame which had once given light to the world, and it did not last long enough to finish the greater number at least of the larger edifices, such as the cathedral of Cologne, and the church of St. Ouen at Rouen. But when the work was completed, or only half completed, the people stood in wonder before the gigantic structures which they had seen rising from the earth as if by magic, which they had themselves assisted to build. And next day, no longer comprehending the power which had created these edifices, they related that the devil had built Notre Dame in Paris and the cathedral of Cologne.

The completion of the half finished gothic cathe-

drals has often been under discussion. And if this were still possible, it would be a crime against the spirit of history, which speaks out so plainly in them in their present state. They were a ruin before they were finished, because the spirit which had created or imagined them was dead, before they could be completed.

Another fraternity in Rouen, which had branches at Caen and many other places in Normandy, was that of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. The people of Rouen have done a great deal to gain for their city the name of "Ville de la Sainte Vierge." Her image once stood at the corner of every street, on the outside of every house; and many of these images have survived the Revolution, which, upon the whole, was much less severe in its persecution of such figures than the Reformation. The fraternity of the Immaculate Conception was really a society for the propagation of the worship of the Virgin Mary; and such was its success in Normandy that her festival soon went by no other name than "la fête aux Normands."

How this fraternity originated it is impossible to say, unless like me you give implicit credit to popular tradition. But in this case that authority is not consistent. Some assert that William the Conqueror sent an abbot Helfin to Denmark, and that he, having in a storm offered up a prayer on the immaculate conception to the mother of God, was saved by the Virgin, and instituted the fraternity in honour of her. Others maintain that a nameless

canon of Rouen was its founder. The history, as given in the *Legende dorée* (edit. 1531) is as follows :—

The pious canon prayed often and fervently to the Virgin Mary. But the good man was of flesh and blood, and so the devil once played him and his patroness a scurvy trick. He kindled a flame in his bosom, which made him forget, on the other side of the Seine, both the canon and Mary, and the immaculate conception, and drove him into the bed of the handsome wife of a peasant. The malicious fiend was no doubt highly delighted. Having come to the Seine, on his way back to Rouen, the adulterer got into a boat; there he again became the pious canon, and began praying his Horæ to the Virgin. But the devil was impatient to carry home his plump, goodly prey; so, as the reverend man was pronouncing the words, "Ave Maria, gratia plena," he capsized the boat, and hastened with the soul of the sinner the shortest way to hell, where he had to suffer three days for his peccadillo. On the fourth, the Virgin Mary took pity on him, and summoned the devil before her. The chronicle must have had a shorthand-writer at the examination, for the questions and answers are given verbatim.

Mary. Why dost thou thus unjustly afflict the soul of our servant?

We ought to have it, replied the spirit of darkness, because it was caught doing our works.

Mary. If the soul of this canon ought to belong

to the one whose works it was doing, then it ought to be our's, for it was reciting our matins when ye seized it, and ye are the more guilty for having acted towards us with so little consideration.

Now, it seems to me—and I have studied the law—that, according to all the principles of jurisprudence, the devil was in legitimate possession; but even in the other world it is perhaps difficult to enforce one's right against queens. Be this as it may, the devil was frightened out of his wits, and scampered off. The Virgin Mary then took the soul of the canon on her arm, and carried it back to its body; whereupon the Seine, in which the corpse still lay, parted, and thus the canon was enabled to walk dry-shod to the bank. On reaching it, his reverence made the following speech to Mary; which, as it would lose much in translation, I give in the original words: "Ma très chère Dame, Vièrge toute belle, mère très agréable de Jesus, mon divin Maître, que vous rendrois-je pour les bienfaits ineffaçables dont vous venez de me combler? Vous m'avez delivré de la gueule du Lion, et mon ame de tourmens très cruels de l'enfer." The Virgin replied: "Je vous prie de ne pas tomber dorénavant dans le peché d'adultère, de peur que votre dernière fin soit pire que la première. Je vous prie encore que dans la suite vous célébrez la fête de ma conception le 8 Decembre et que vous la fassiez célébrer partout. Amen!" From that time the canon turned hermit, and was the first and most zealous propagator of the festival of the immaculate conception.

Pious as were the brothers and sisters of this society, they built no cathedrals. Those days were past. On the contrary, the fraternity was turned, in honour of the immaculate conception, into a sort of academy, which awarded annual prizes for those who had best sung, described, or discoursed on the event. During the 15th century, a prize, consisting of a palm, was first offered for the best poem. Towards the close of the same century, (1493) a second prize—a hat wreathed with laurel—was added. At a later period, the best ballad gained a gold rose, the best ode a silver looking-glass, the best sonnet a gold ring, and the best epigram a laurel wreath. Lastly, a Monsieur Jean Baptiste Boisin, Seigneur de Bonnetot et Conseiller du Roi, et premier président de la cour des comptes, aides et finances, assigned a gold cross for the best French discourse, that should last not less than a quarter of an hour, treating of the immaculate conception. Nothing was to be introduced into it from fables or poetry, and the proofs of the circumstance were to be derived only from the bible, ecclesiastical history, and natural history. I took a good deal of pains in searching for such a speech, as I should like to see the natural history evidences; but my trouble was thrown away.

I have read droll poems on this subject, which, if they were to be printed now-a-days in Rome, would be regarded as at least high treason against the Virgin Mary, and punished as such by the Christian judges of the popish capital. The devil of irony peeps out of every line of them.

The people of Rouen, however, took all that was said for pure earnest; and when, in 1528, one Pierre Barrus made himself merry about the simplicity of the good folk, they were furious, seized the delinquent, accused him of blasphemy against the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mother, and burned him without mercy after a short trial.

The clergy of Rouen saved many other culprits by the privilege of St. Romain, also called the *privilége de la fierté*. This archbishop, whose history swarms with miracles, went forth to encounter a dragon, which was making great havoc in the environs of Rouen, and, as he could not find a priest to accompany him, he took for his attendant a murderer under sentence of death. This man strangled the formidable monster with the bishop's stole. In commemoration of this miracle, and of the aid received by the saint from the criminal, the clergy assumed the right of saving every year a delinquent, with the exception of persons guilty of high treason, whom not even a miracle could deliver.

A short time before Ascension Day, three canons of the chapter went to the prisons, heard the confessions of all the prisoners, and wrote them down. On Ascension Day, they again repaired to the prisons, to see whether any fresh prisoners had arrived, and then went to the assembled chapter to read their reports, after the chapter had sung *Veni creator spiritus;* whereupon, it proceeded to the choice of the criminal who was to be pardoned. The chaplain of the fraternity of St. Romain carried the

name of the favoured culprit to the parliament, which, after a solemn musical mass, opened the paper containing the name, and had it read to them. They then went through the proceedings afresh, condemned him, and informed him of his pardon. He was now delivered up to the chaplain of the fraternity, who, accompanied by the councillors and the civic guard, led him away, removed the chain from his legs in the street, and put it into his hand, after which he went with him to St. Romain's chapel. The people assembled for the procession went thither too.

Meanwhile, tidings of the confirmation of the pardon were carried to the chapter. The bells of the cathedral proclaimed this confirmation, on which the church was opened, and in presence of the congregation the written confessions of all the prisoners, excepting that of the pardoned criminal, were solemnly burned. The confession of the latter was delivered to him. All the relics in the city were collected, and, headed by those of St. Romain, borne before the chapter, which went in solemn procession, preceded by the archbishop, to the chapel of the saint. Here the archbishop addressed a discourse to the pardoned man, and, after he had recited his *confiteor*, laid his hands on his head, and granted him absolution. He was then conducted to the shrine containing the relics of St. Romain, which he had to lift up thrice, on which, crowned with flowers, and followed by the clergy and the multitude, he carried it to the principal church. Here mass was read, and

the whole assembly then returned to the chapel of St. Romain, where mass was again read, and where a priest held a discourse to the people concerning the criminal, his crime, his penitence, and his pardon. After this address, the priest, in token of reconciliation, handed a goblet of wine to the pardoned man, who drank it off, and finally went with the master of the fraternity of St. Romain to his house, where he supped and slept. Next day, he went once more to the principal church, heard mass in presence of the assembled chapter, and confessed, on which an ecclesiastic addressed another discourse to him, and he was formally dismissed.

It is refreshing to meet the clergy in such a career, and the more so as they have been oftener actuated by revenge than mercy. I have described this ceremony circumstantially, that the reader may compare it with the auto-da-fés of Spain, and ask himself, whether those flames, those shrieks, and those moans of the victims can produce a more powerful, or rather a more moral, effect upon the people than the touching scene where a priest looses the chains of a prisoner, where he presents him to the multitude as a victim rescued by religion, and, with the word pardon in the mouth of the people, exhorts to penitence, to amendment.

The whole ceremony, moreover, is characteristic of Normandy, as the auto-da-fé of Spain. In Normandy, too, victims of religious fanaticism have fallen in times of excitement, when the first ideas of reform began to be developed, when the quarrels

between the Calvinists and Catholics led to civil war; but never could the Inquisition strike permanent root in a soil in which the tree of liberty stood more firmly than almost any where else. For this reason, the clergy sought and found a different sphere of action, and went forth in procession, not to auto-da-fés, but to pardon a condemned criminal; and hence they held a festival of mercy, not of blood.

The faith of the Normans was always mixed up with a strong dose of superstition. You need but turn over the law journals of France for a single week, and you will be sure to meet with some Norman trial for witchcraft, which, indeed, does not terminate in the burning of the witches or wizards, but only in their committal to prison as swindlers.

It is in the country that superstition more especially prevails. The principal, nay, frequently the only books possessed by a peasant, are a prayer book and an almanac. These almanacs are of es sential utility to enable one to form a correct judgment of the people, because they are written in their spirit, and correspond with their wants and circumstances. A few extracts from the "Almanach de l'an 1835," printed in Rouen, will therefore not be uninteresting. It contains recipes and sayings for every thing. It predicts the events of the year:—

De St. Paul la claire journée
Nous dénote une bonne année;
S'il fait vent nous aurons la guerre
S'il neige ou pluit chérté sur la terre;
Si l'on voit fort épais les brouillards
Mortalité de toutes parts.

It then gives a "Prognostication perpetuelle, composée par les anciens philosophes, comme Pythagoras, Joseph le Juste, et plusieurs autres," showing, according as the first day of the year is Sunday, Monday, &c. whether the year will be prosperous, rich, poor, warm, whether there will be war or peace, and what not.

The almanac is the doctor of the people :—

Si tu fais tirer de ton bras
Du sang le jour de Matthias,
Il sera net tout l'année
Sans fièvre te tiendra sain
Jusqu'au retour de l'an prochain.

And again :—

Le jour de St. Gertrude l'on se fait doit
Faire saigner au bras droit,
Celui que ainsi faira
Cette année les yeux clairs aura.

But, in spite of his superstition and of his belief in the oracles of dice and chance, the Norman continues to be upon the whole a tolerably practical man, and usually retains a pretty good share of what the French call *bon sens*, and we common sense. This the almanac attests in two or three specimens.

Lever à cinq, diner à neuf,
Souper à cinq, coucher à neuf,
Faites vivre d'ans nonante-neuf.

Un œuf d'une heure seulement,
Pain d'un jour, oiseaux bien petits,
Chair d'un an, poissons de dix,
Cela fait vivre longuement.

Qui a bon lit, dedans ne dort,
Qui a bon pain, dedans ne mord,
Qui a du bien, n'en prend confort,
Autant vaudra-t-il qu'il fut mort.

This practical sense, combined with the benevolence peculiar to the Normans, though frequently disguised beneath a repulsive coldness of manner, I have again met with in a song sung by the little children in the streets of Rouen, while at play, to this effect:—

St. Pierre, St. Simon,
Gardez notre maison;
S'il y vient un pauvre,
Baillez li [lui] l'aumone;
S'il y vient un pelerin,
Baillez li de notre vin;
S'il y vient un larron
Baillez li du lourd baton,
Pipi—i—i—i—i—i.

In the towns, the above-mentioned almanacs have ceased to possess any exclusive authority; still there are people enough there who never give a treat or take an excursion till they have consulted an oracle of this kind; and they frequently do the same on occasion of more important matters. Upon the whole, however, their influence is on the decline; the hawkers cry them in the streets as *almanachs merveilleux*, *almanachs menteux*, &c. Of late years, too, the patriotic almanacs, the Napoleonic and republican, have gained the ascendency in the towns, and found at least partial encouragement in the country, so that they threaten in time wholly to supersede the old ones.

The Norman towns, and indeed the provincial towns in general, have of late become more and more French. French levity, gallantry, coquetry, have gained a firmer footing in Rouen itself. I shall adduce evidence to this point also from the popular literature. There were published at Rouen, at the beginning of this century, a great number of popular books, called by the editor, M. Labbéy, *La Bibliothèque bleue.* One of these books was entitled "Catechismus des Amants, par demandes et reponses, ou sont enseignées les principales maximes de l'amour et le devoir d'un veritable amant." In the first of these dialogues we find the following :—

She. Are you a lover ?

He. Yes, by the favour of Cupid.

She. What is a lover ?

He. A lover is a person who, after he has made a sincere and true declaration, seeks to make himself be loved by her whom he loves.

SECOND DIALOGUE.

She. What are the signs of a true lover ?

He. Attention, assiduity, sincerity, punctuality, and billets-doux.

She. What is sincerity ?

He. A strict accordance between what we say and what we mean.

She. What do you understand by the word billets-doux ?

He. A little compliment in writing which we

send to our mistress, when we cannot find an opportunity of conversing with her, &c.

FOURTH DIALOGUE.

She. At what age may one begin to love?

He. Boys at 14, and girls at 12, according as they are forward for their age, &c.

FIFTH DIALOGUE.

She. How many kinds of happiness are there in love?

He. Seven.

She. What are they?

He. 1. Happy are the lovers who truly love, for he does not feel the joys of love who is but moderately penetrated with it.

2. Happy are the lovers who are strong and hearty, for they are loved the longer and the more highly esteemed.

3. Happy are the lovers who are fond of laughing, for in love there are too frequent occasions for grief, without needing to be ill-humoured besides.

4. Happy are the lovers who have *esprit*, for they enjoy pleasures which the silly do not feel.

5. Happy are the lovers who have patience, for it is very difficult to find a mistress who grants at the first moment what the lover desires.

6. Happy are the lovers who are rich, for love is prodigal of money.

7. Happy are the lovers who have no rivals,

for they have the favour of their mistresses to themselves.

To judge from this specimen of the popular literature, we must confess that the people of Rouen have gradually become Frenchified enough.

Another of these books is called, "Catechismus des grandes filles pour être mariées, ensemble matière d'attirer les amants." I subjoin an extract from this.

Question. What is the sacrament that is most necessary for great girls?

Answer. Marriage.

Q. At what age ought the handsome to be married?

A. In general at 16 or 18.

Q. Why at that age?

A. For fear a mishap might befal their honour.

Q. But at what age ought those who are not handsome to be married?

A. The moment a young man asks for them, they ought not to let slip a good opportunity, &c.

In this catechism there is a very pretty litany, which might be recommended to the fair sex in other Catholic countries.

Kyrie, I desire
Christe, to be married.
Kyrie, I pray all the saints
Christe, that it may take place to-morrow.
St. Mary, every body is getting married,
St. Joseph, what have I done?
St. Nicholas, forget me not.

St. Medicis, O that I had a good husband!
St. Matthias, that he might fear God,
St. John, that he might love me dearly,
St. Francis, that he might be true to me,
St. Andrew, that he might be to my taste,
St. Didier, that he might be industrious,
St. Honoré, that he might not be a gambler,
St. Severin, that he might not be a drunkard,
St. Clement, that he might be hard-working,
St. Nicaise, that he might be kind to me,
St. Jesse, that he might give me a carriage,
St. Boniface, that my marriage might take place
St. Augustin, to-morrow morning.

Prayer. O Lord, who madest Adam of the dust and gavest Eve to him for a helpmate, send me, if it pleaseth thee, a good husband for my helpmate, not for the sake of sinful lust, but to honour thee, and to have children who may praise thee. Amen.

Indeed, it is difficult to say whether all this is irony, or what else it is intended for. So much is certain that there was a time when the fair damsels of Rouen studied this catechism much more diligently than the Napoleon-Catholic. These books are now nearly out of fashion, but you may soon convince yourself that the females of Rouen have no need of the catechism quoted above, that they are prepared for any examination, and that the precepts inculcated in it have been gradually transfused into the blood. Besides, I have no wish to play into the hands of those who vituperate the pre-

sent age. Robert *le magnifique*, in his time, made mention of a *fons meretricum*, and of his *custos meretricum* in Rouen. The thing then is ancient, and it is only the tract, the catechism, that is an innovation.

At present, it almost seems as if the ladies of Rouen, and indeed the French in general, were becoming more grave. I was at a ball, and observed that scarcely a lady above thirty years old was dancing. I was struck with this circumstance, and in secret bitterly reproached the gentlemen, both young and old. Determined to make a sacrifice and to shame them, I asked a very handsome woman of thirty-two to dance; but she assured me that she was obliged to decline my invitation, having given up dancing because she was too old. When I expressed my surprise at this to a friend, he coolly replied, "Nos grandes dames sont des *begueules*, as an honest peasant would say." It would be difficult to translate the word, which signifies much the same as: "They would like well enough, but—"

But it is time to close the pleadings, and to sum up. The people in and around Rouen, like most of the Normans, were once extremely devout. Some of them are still so; at least, they have not lost all faith: in this case, they are superstitous, put confidence in chance and luck, seek counsel from that when their understanding is at fault, possess nevertheless a due share of common sense, heart and feeling, are disposed to mirth, and fond of the

pleasures of the table and the bottle. Time has opened their eyes upon many points, and they are gradually relinquishing what is antiquated, and betaking themselves to the new patriotic almanac. Though the *grandes dames* occasionally act the prude and will not dance, yet the unmarried scarcely need the Catechism of Love, for they know it by heart, and teach and learn the truths which it contains in the *école mutuelle* of their elder sisters and brothers.

CHAPTER XXXI.

History of Rouen and of Normandy in general—Atrocities of the Frankish Sovereigns—Fredegonde and Brunehilde—Murder of Pretextatus, archbishop of Rouen—The Carlovingians—State of the People at the time of the Invasion of the Normans—Character of the Invaders—Designs of Louis d'Outremer upon Normandy—Influence of the Norman Institutions—Insurrection of the Peasantry—Conquest of England—Influence of that Event on Normandy—Its state under the Successors of William the Conqueror—Normandy becomes a French Province—Rights and Privileges of Rouen confirmed to the City.

In Havre you need but look at the houses to be convinced that the town has no history, though its historians may do so to prove the very reverse. In Rouen, from the first moment that we begin to thread our way through the narrow streets, a contrary feeling pervades the mind; and at every step we are detained by a house, a church, a broken stone introduced into the wall of a new building, which remind us of other times, other customs, and other ways of thinking. In the cathedral, we are met by the shades of the Norman dukes and the once powerful archbishops of Rouen; the Palace of Justice reminds us of the Echiquier of Normandy, and of the Germanic law-institutions in which it

originated; yon fountain is the monument of the Pucelle, who here received the fire-baptism of her greatness; and all those houses proclaim the energy and manliness of the citizens of Rouen, and tell how they had the spirit to preserve their independence, even in opposition to their princes.

The history of Rouen, the representative of the Norman bourgeoisie, around which the history of the whole country revolves, is lost in the hoary antiquity of tradition. The name of Rothomagus, which it bore in the time of the Romans, and which no doubt sounded barbarous enough to Roman ears, attests that before they were masters of Gaul it was a place worth naming. Scholars squabble about the origin of this name; but the Church decided that it was derived from the idol Roth, and sang for above a thousand years, *Extirpato Rotho idolo*, though it is now placed almost beyond doubt that neither god nor idol of the name of Roth ever existed there.

It is not till the time of the Franks that the annals of Rouen become more interesting, as part of the bloody drama in which Brunehilde and Fredegonde were the principal heroines was acted here.

The Roman maritime provinces of Gaul, to which belonged the country afterwards called Normandy, shook off the yoke of Rome at the beginning of the fifth century, and managed till the conclusion of the same century to maintain their freedom and independence under chiefs of their own choice. Clovis at length conquered the country, which, under his

successors, witnessed a series of crimes in the family of its rulers, such as can scarcely be paralleled in the history of any nation or any age. Of these atrocities, Liquet, the historian of Normandy, presents a hideous summary. "The history of this period," he says, "is full of murders and slaughter. If you would see one brother strangle another, a son stab his father, a father murder his son, a husband kill his wife, the conqueror his vanquished foe, and throw him, his wife, and his children, into a well; a king of the Franks (Thierry) invite a king of the Thuringians, (Hermanfroy) to a consultation, and hurl him from the top of his castle; a father order his son to be burned alive; monks attempt to assassinate their bishops in the night; bishops deposed in the assembled council for adultery and murder; women resort sometimes to the dagger, at others to poison, in order to rid themselves of a disgraced husband or a dangerous opponent—if you would see a picture of these and many more crimes, you need but turn over the annals of the Franks from Clovis to Charlemagne. In reading the accounts of these cruelties, enormities, and murders, you fancy that you are wading in blood, and expect at every step to stumble over a corpse."

In the history of Rouen, the character of this period is portrayed to the life. Chilperic, king of Neustria, married Fredegonde, after he had caused his first wife, Galsuinde, to be put to death. Sigebert, his brother, and husband of Brunehilde, Galsuinde's sister, was urged by his wife to revenge the

death of his sister-in-law; and after he had defeated his brother in battle and driven him from place to place, the latter and his wife could devise no better way of saving and revenging themselves than assassination. Queen Fredegonde summoned two of her pages into her presence, and said to them: "Go to Sigebert; pretend that ye are come to join him, and watch for an opportunity to kill him. I will load you and your's with honours when you return. Should ye perish, I will distribute abundance of alms for you at the shrines of the saints." This was enough. The poisoned dagger, which the queen delivered to the murderers, pierced Sigebert, just at the moment when he was proclaimed king of Neustria.

Brunehilde, after the death of her husband, was banished to Rouen. Here Chilperic's son saw his aunt, fell in love with her, and they were married by Pretextatus, bishop of Rouen. The revenge of Fredegonde and Chilperic overtook them. Both hastened to Rouen, enticed sister-in-law and son out of the church in which they had taken sanctuary, caused the latter to be put to death, deposed the bishop, and sent him into exile. Seven years afterwards, Chilperic was murdered in his turn, and Pretextatus, after the people of Rouen had expelled Melance, his successor, was reinstated in his dignity. Fredegonde now came to Rouen, to pass her widowhood there. Her revenge was not appeased. Pretextatus was stabbed at the altar by assassins, while not one of the assembled priests had the

courage to hasten to his assistance, and thus to excite the displeasure of the king's widow. One citizen of Rouen only durst accuse her and call her to account: a poisoned bowl was his reward. She had the audacity to visit the dying bishop, to see whether the wound was mortal, and he said to her: "Who could have committed this crime but one who has murdered kings, and so often spilt innocent blood! I shall die, and thou, the author of the crime, shalt be cursed from age to age, and my blood shall be upon thy head." His prediction was fulfilled.

These events in Rouen characterize the whole epoch of the foundation of the Frankish dominion in Gaul. When one surveys all these crimes and cruelties renewed from day to day, and propagated from generation to generation, one asks in astonishment what can be the moral cause of them, and the answer generally is, that they were owing to the rudeness of the people, ignorance, and the want of civilization. But this answer is in contradiction to history. A few centuries earlier, such deeds among the Germans, who then were assuredly less polished, less civilized, and among the Franks in particular, would have excited the abhorrence of the whole nation; for, at the time when such events were occurring in France, nothing of the kind was taking place among the Germans living in Germany. A few centuries afterwards, we see similar phenomena recurring in Italy, and at a still later period in Russia, where great advances had already been

made in civilization: but in all these countries such phenomena appeared at a moment when the internal circumstances of the State were nearly the same.

The ancient Germans recognized only the general interest, to which all private interests were subordinate. The individual was lost in the mass. In war alone they acknowledged the supremacy of one man. Incessant hostilities accustomed them more and more to this acknowledgment, and thus we soon see sovereign families arising. They were virtually kings, but the idea of royalty had not penetrated into the mass of the people any more than into those sovereign families themselves; and thus people and kings considered the interests of sovereigns as mere family interests, their wars as mere family quarrels, in which the people took part in general from habit alone, or from a love of war, or for the sake of booty. Quarrels between the ruling families were in the regular course of things confined to those families, and the importance of the interests at stake accounts in some measure for the atrocity of the means employed in defence of them, because they led more speedily and more surely to the proposed end.

On the overthrow of the republics in Italy, this phenomenon recurs between the families claiming the sovereignty; and in the North our forefathers witnessed the like spectacle, because the people there were not yet penetrated with the idea of royalty. As soon as this idea had taken firm hold of the people and the rulers, those crimes disap-

peared, or at least became exceptions; and we see subsequently another epoch, the reverse of the former, in which sovereigns, great as well as small, laid waste countries and towns, whenever they had a dispute to settle. And, horrible as was the time in which we meet with the bloody spectres of a Brunehilde and a Fredegonde, the historical inquirer, while perusing the events of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, might be tempted to wish it back again, at least on this particular account.

How little the idea of royalty had at that time taken root among the people is shown by the deposition of the Merovingians and the elevation of the Carlovingian line. A family had found means so to augment its power and consequence as soon to be able to counterpoise the ruling family. The preponderance once gained, the weaker of the two was obliged to yield to the stronger. But Charlemagne was the first that laid the foundation-stone of royalty in France and Germany. This, however, could not be done but at the expense of the Germanic principle. Among the Germans, the entire state reposed upon the popular courts, which were the only legislative, judicial, and executive authority. Charlemagne's wars and the tricks of his counts turned this right into an oppressive burden for the people; and thus he was soon enabled to undermine this basis of the Germanic institutions, and to deliver up the courts to judges appointed by the king. The shade of Rome conquered the greatest hero of Germany, and was

destined thenceforward to hold Germany itself in subjection. The people and their constitution were lifted from their hinges, and had no intrinsic support till the fundamental idea of Charles had gained a footing. Hence the moral weakness, after his death, of the once mighty kingdom of the Franks; hence the indolence and degeneracy of those same Franks, who had so recently subdued the bravest of the brave Germans—the Saxons. The innovations of Charlemagne were a positive revolution; and their necessary consequence was that, under the new order of things, every one sought a place for himself, in which he could acquire other rights instead of those which he had lost. Hence the selfishness of the great, and their vices, and their crimes; hence, too, the indifference of the people to all that happened; hence, finally, their moral torpor, which opened to the Normans the way into the heart of France.

It is not requisite to state how this change operated; a descendant of Charlemagne's, Charles the Bald, dispenses me from that task. He described the state of the country in the following terms, at a council held at Pitres (Pistis), five leagues from Rouen: "Foreigners consume our country before our faces; the devastations of the enemy turn it into a desert; the inhabitants are slaughtered and dispersed; the churches and towns are converted into ruins; the bodies of our holy intercessors are torn from their graves; the servants of the Lord are driven from their asylums, ...

because we have opened our hearts to the devil; because we have rent from our souls the blossoms and fruits of faith, hope, charity, and all the other virtues; because we have slain ourselves with the sword of sin; because we glow in the fire of avarice, rapacity, envy, adultery, and other crimes, non solum per naturalem sexum, sed etiam per sexum qui est contra naturam; because we do not withstand the attacks of the Evil One; because we sell justice, and it is not to be obtained but by means of presents."

It may be assumed with tolerable certainty that the clergy had prompted this speech of Charles the Bald's; but, mystical as it is, still it is clear enough to portray the state of the country. What he says in regard to justice only tends to confirm the views expressed above.

The more the seed deposited in the ground by Charlemagne developed itself, the more plainly it showed the nature of the fruit that it would produce. "Royalty, sunk into contempt"—one might rather say, not having yet been transfused into the constitution of the people—"was but a title without power in the hand of a man without mind. Under Charles the Simple, who was on the point of creating a duke of Normandy, the great could without difficulty render an authority, which had previously been personal and temporary, hereditary in their families. The lords of the second class joined without obstruction the banner of the leader whom they preferred to the others. Hence that multitude of despots, who treat as their equal him who should

be their sovereign, and whose kingdom at the end of the tenth century might be said to be confined to the town of Laon. Hence that ambition, that disorder, that hatred, and those intestine wars; those acts of violence, the only medium of compassing objects; and all those crimes which were sure of impunity. In vain did twelve prelates, and among them the bishop of Rouen, strive to remedy these evils. Their attempt had no other result than to furnish striking evidence of the incorrigibility of the clergy, and the weakness of the king. 'We are bishops,' said they, 'but we by no means perform our duties as such. We neglect our vocation as preachers. The flocks committed to our care forsake God; they do what is wrong before our faces, and we say nothing. If a reproof displeasing to these rude minds escapes us, they turn against us the words applied by our Lord to the Pharisees, and say, 'They bind oppressive burdens on the shoulders of men, but will not stir a finger to remove them.' The church of God is going to ruin through our silence. Where are the sinners whom we have converted?"*

Charlemagne had politically annihilated the people. The above-quoted voices of the times describe the state of the nobles and the clergy. At this moment, the Normans made their appearance, and the country fell a prey to them because there was no longer a people to oppose their invasions. Without taking this state of the country into consideration, it is absolutely impossible to conceive how a few thousand

* Liquet I. 64.—Concil Frool. ap. Lalbe et Cossart, t. ix. col. 523.

northern pirates could traverse unmolested and lay waste the kingdom of the Franks; for though the former were very brave, still the Franks had shown often enough that in this respect they were not inferior to any nation, that they had no need to fear the Moors, the terror of the South, any more than the Saxons, who were the scourge of the North.

It is not my intention to recapitulate the events of the wars of the Normans with the Franks. The reader may find them in every historian, and there see how separate parties first arrived, plundered on their own movement, and returned home with their booty: how that booty enticed fresh invaders, till at length, Rollo, a Norwegian, with a force composed chiefly of Danes, landed in Normandy, and soon forced the king of France to conclude a peace (that of Claire d'Epte, in 912) by which Normandy was ceded to him by France as an independent duchy, on condition of his embracing the Christian religion. Whether, or in what form, Rollo did homage to the king of France, is a disputed point with historical inquirers; and the majority regard the accounts given in the chronicles to which I have alluded in another place as mere fables. At any rate, this is one of those fables which describe the acting persons, and which, even if invented by the people, are of great interest to the historical student, who wishes to appreciate a given period of time. For the rest, all these particular circumstances are of less consequence in themselves than as effects of the immigration of the Normans into France upon the institutions of the country and the state of the

people. I subjoin a few words concerning the civilisation of the Normans at the period of their arrival in France.

All the chronicles of the time, with rare exceptions, speak of the Normans as rude, savage, pugnacious, bloodthirsty barbarians. These invaders had no historians, for their business was fighting, and so they left their enemies to describe them. Much must be charged to this account. But, no doubt, they really were terrible in war. For many centuries after them, the law of the conqueror was invariably written with blood. But, on closer examination, it appears that, in regard to civilisation at least, the Normans were not behind the mass of those whom they subdued, and that, in regard to morality, manliness, and a sense of justice and duty, they were far before them. The ancient popular songs and traditions of the Normans need not shrink from a comparison with any thing that the bastard literature of the half Romanised French has produced. We see, moreover, from these stories themselves, that poetry, esteemed by the great, was cultivated by the whole nation; that women were more highly respected than in any other country; that the Scalds were held in repute; and, lastly, that baths were as common among the Normans as among the people of Rome and Asia; that abundance and luxury prevailed at their feasts; that they understood the art of decorating their ships and their weapons, without being on that account the less daring and valiant. All these circumstances bespeak an advance in civilisation, which one would

not expect to find among a people of whom the chronicles never speak but as of wild beasts and the pestilence.

But what tells far more than all this, is the state of things that very soon followed the conclusion of the peace in Normandy. Rollo did not sheath his sword — it became the sword of justice. On this point there is a popular story, to which I have already adverted, that of the bracelet in the wood of Roumare, which speaks more plainly than the testimony of contemporary writers. These writers, besides, agree that, immediately after the peace, Rollo and his Normans gave themselves laws, which protected person and property, and that they knew how to maintain them in all their force. The Normans themselves rebuilt the towns which they previously thought it behoved them to destroy; and the husbandman at his plough, the citizen in his workshop, could fearlessly follow their respective occupations.

If, finally, we compare the state of France in the centuries immediately succeeding the Conquest with that of Normandy, the result is still more important; for while chaos reigned supreme in the former, in Normandy, law, justice, civilisation, lifted their heads so high that the Normans very soon became the arbiters of the destiny of France, and had strength left besides to show in Italy, in Greece, and in England, how far they surpassed other nations in polish and valour; till at length they gave, by means of their trouvers and of chivalry, a new direction to literature as well as to the military art.

The history of Rouen furnishes a proof that the people very soon began to find themselves gainers by the invasion of the Normans. Scarcely thirty years after the peace of Claire d'Epte (in 943), after Rollo's son, William Longsword, had been murdered by Arnold, duke of Flanders, Louis d'Outremer, king of France, repaired to Rouen, and took under his care Richard, the son of William, who was yet a minor. The people, regarding this proceeding as a stratagem of the king's to secure the person of the young duke, and to keep him prisoner, assembled in the streets, and rose in a mass in behalf of their prince. The insurrection assumed every moment a more threatening aspect. The armed multitude at length prepared to attack the house where the king resided, and to set the duke at liberty by force. The king was obliged to take the boy in his arms, to show him to the concourse of people, and to assure them that it was far from his intention to do any harm to the duke, that he only wished to keep him near himself, that he might give him such an education as would render him worthy to rule the Normans. The great majority of those men had witnessed, as boys, the invasion of the Normans, or had heard at least, when young, the stories told by their fathers concerning them. And it was these who stood up for their Norman duke. The people consisted chiefly of descendants from the Gauls and Franks, and they threatened the descendant of the kings who had reigned over their forefathers. The conduct of the Normans, and the innovations intro-

duced by them, must, to judge from this single circumstance, have been of such a nature as to make the people forget their history, their descent, and their former sympathies; and this is the strongest evidence that can be adduced in favour of the conquerors.

Louis d'Outremer had merely yielded to the vehemence of the people; he had no notion of missing such an opportunity of re-uniting Normandy with his dominions. He soon forgot his promise, entered Normandy with an army, and partially enforced a momentary submission. A Danish auxiliary force, and the escape of Richard from his captivity, deranged his plans. He was obliged to retire before the new comers. Here we again see the people of Rouen actively bestirring themselves, and taking prisoner the king of France (944) when he entered their city on his retreat; which seems to prove that the first insurrection was more than a mere passing excitement. This is rendered still more evident, when we read in the historical works of the times that, at the entry of Richard into Rouen, the people thronged in such multitudes to meet him, that the clergy, when they had reached the extremity of the suburb, were prevented by the concourse from approaching the duke. The subsequent siege of Rouen by Louis, Otho, emperor of Germany, and Arnold of Flanders, did not last long enough to put the attachment of the people to a decisive test, and merely afforded occasion to the Normans, when the besiegers were withdrawing overnight, to display

their valour; for they attacked and killed a great number of them at a place called Rougemare, from the blood spilt there on that day, and then pursued them as far as the territory of Amiens.

The effects of the laws and institutions of the Normans always manifested themselves as promoting the interests of the country; and though many things, especially the increasing demoralisation of the clergy, opposed the development of those effects, yet the state of the country was, in a political respect, invariably ahead of that of all the surrounding provinces. "During the tenth century," says Liquet, "the religious position of Normandy was nearly the same as that of other countries, because it was not without difficulty that the ancient faith succeeded in subduing the new generation; the political position, on the contrary, was different, because the new generation, possessors through the Conquest, independent by rational instinct, succeeded in quashing the subsisting form of government, and in founding order every where in the place of anarchy."

The operation of the Germanic principle was destined to show itself in a way dangerous to the conquerors, who, like all conquerors, formed an aristocracy. In the towns, the victors and the vanquished became more and more blended by daily intercourse. The citizens participated in their way in the Norman institutions, and both parties soon forgot who was the conqueror and who the conquered. In the country, this fusion took place more slowly. There

the peasantry formed a distinct class, in many respects without law, subject to and dependent on the invader aristocracy. But the influence of that which met the eye of every peasant when he came to the city, the independence of the citizens and their freedom, could not be without effect; and hence it was that the Norman peasants were the first in Europe who claimed the rights of man, while those of all other countries were still the willing serfs of their lords.

A century had not elapsed from the settlement of the northern invaders, before Normandy witnessed the first insurrection of the peasantry. In several counties, the villagers assembled, and resolved to throw off the yoke of their lords, and in future to obey only such laws as they should impose on themselves. Each village chose two deputies, to discuss in a general assembly the proposals of individual villages, and to adopt such resolutions as they should deem right and proper. In this proceeding, the lords discovered manifest high treason; and Raoul, uncle of duke Richard II., was commissioned to chastise the insurgents. He fell upon the assembly, caused several of the deputies to be burned alive, while the others had their hands and feet, their noses and ears, cut off, and their eyes put out, to make them, according to the expression of the historian of that time, "unfit for any thing."

In Germany, similar cruelties, practised after the wars of the peasants, are accounted for on the principle of retaliation for atrocities committed by the

peasants themselves. In Normandy, the nobles have no such excuse; and, indeed, any where else it would be superfluous, as the lords would most assuredly have acted precisely in the same manner without it. A ravenous beast, which breaks its chain and tears its master in pieces, is caught and chained up again. But a slave, a serf, who merely bursts, or strives to burst, his fetters to become a man — oh! that is a totally different affair, and demands the interference of the executioner.

Some years afterwards, a similar insurrection took place in Bretagne, which had also been partially conquered by the Normans; and there, too, a contest ensued between the peasants and the lords, which was decided in favour of the latter. The spirit that called forth these insurrections, however, was not subdued; and, not long afterwards, we find mention made, in the history of Normandy, of communes of free peasants.

Let people think as they please of revolutions and insurrections of peasants, it must be admitted that they are invariably, more or less, a consequence of the advanced civilisation of the insurgents; for they are attributable only to the aroused feeling of independence, to the consciousness of rights which men think themselves authorised to claim, and which they have the courage to demand — evidences these of an advance towards intellectual and civil maturity, though the fruit may be precocious.

These insurrections are indirectly of importance for the history of Normandy. In the sources, men-

tion is rarely made of the legislative right of the free Normans; on the other hand, this insurrection of peasants, in which the serfs claimed that right, attests that it was possessed by the freemen, for we may be pretty sure that the former demanded no more than they saw every day in the possession of others.

It would be wonderful if, in a country where the peasants already began to think and to feel their importance, the other classes too had not endeavoured to open for themselves a more unrestricted career. The insurrection of peasants and principles of reformation were destined to be contemporaneous, and to go hand in hand, as in Germany. And thus we see that, nearly about the same time (since 1000), the Norman clergy sought to prove the dissolubility of marriages from the Bible, that images were destroyed in churches, that the necessity of tithes for salvation was doubted; that, lastly, the presence of Christ in the host was questioned; that even bishops broached this question, and so forced Duke Richard II. to threaten them with deposition from their dignity. These things occurred in Normandy five hundred years before Luther; they prove much more than any reasoning the moral state of the country and the influence of the Germanic principle.

We now arrive at a phenomenon which afforded the most striking evidence of the political energy of the country. The conquest of England by William, the seventh duke of Normandy, scarcely one hundred and fifty years after Rollo landed as a pirate in

France, is not to be accounted for, if even all possible justice is done to the genius of the Conqueror, but by the moral superiority of the Normans over the Anglo-Saxons. If there is any one whom all this does not suffice, let him recollect that, at the moment when Normandy had to complete and to defend this conquest, at a time when a German emperor was obliged to appear barefoot before the pope and beg his absolution, William dared forbid his clergy all correspondence with Rome, curtail their jurisdiction, prohibit excommunication without his previous permission, and at the same time keep the nobility within bounds by the God's peace and the people by the law of couvre-feu; and that, in the enforcement of these measures, adopted with the consent of the states, he could always reckon upon the support of the majority of his subjects, while in other countries the lightnings of the church shattered crowns, and the power of the nobles oppressed the people and undermined thrones.

The conquest of England gave the history of Normandy a different direction. The moral and political state of the country had raised its dukes to a consequence wholly disproportionate to the extent of their dominions. All France was immediately under their supremacy; and as soon as Hugh Capet had secured the Duke of Normandy, he saw a way opened for him to the throne of France. The ancient propensity of the Normans to emigration and conquest continued to impel them to seek a field for

their activity out of their own country, the moment there was nothing left for them to do at home. Italy, Sicily, and Greece succumbed to separate bands of Norman knights. The moral energy of the country, this fondness for emigration, adventures, and conquests, would certainly sooner or later have made the Norman dukes kings of France, if such another epoch had supervened as that when Richard I. placed the crown on the head of his friend, Hugh Capet. The conquest of England assigned to them a different field.

On the conquest of England, Normandy became a province of that kingdom. Civil dissensions in England, the divided interests of the nobility, at once Norman and English, the foibles, the vices, and the crimes of the Conqueror's successors, who, like the offspring of all other conquerors, bore the curse of the people who had fallen by the sword of their progenitors, the degeneracy of the nobles through the wealth and the spoil which they had acquired in England, lastly, the endless wars of the barons among themselves under William's descendants, broke the strength of Normandy, and gradually estranged the people from the sovereigns of England. The question whether France should become Norman was reversed, and thenceforward the only point was whether Normandy should become French.

The history of Normandy, from the moment of the conquest of England, exhibits an incesssant conflict of the nobles with one another and with their

princes, in which the people were invariably the scapegoat, and had to bear the consequences of this state of things, till it terminated at last in the moral ruin of the nobles themselves, and in the conquest of Normandy by France. There are few epochs that excite such profound disgust in the historical inquirer. The sons of William the Conqueror, weak and unenterprizing like those of Charlemagne, quarrelled like them about the spoils of their father, and thus afforded, like them too, the fairest opportunity for annihilating themselves. William II., King of England, strove to wrest the duchy of Normandy from his brother Robert Courtehose. During these dissensions, and more especially through the lawlessness of the nobles, caused and promoted by this state of things, the inhabitants of Rouen saw their rights trampled under foot and their trade destroyed. Still they had no thought of throwing themselves into the arms of a foreigner, and so they merely sought protection of the stronger, the king of England, and with Conan, one of the wealthiest citizens at their head, offered to open the gates of the city to him. They actually admitted a number of the king's troops into the place. But, at the same moment, Robert's barons, to whom the plan of the inhabitants had been betrayed, entered the city by another gate. The streets were transformed into a field of battle. As the princes fought, brother against brother, so did the citizens. Robert, who seems to have had no more heart in his body than brains in his head, fled from the city; but his younger

brother Henry remained, and at length gained with his knights the victory over the citizens, who adhered to the king. The revenge of the duke's partisans was worthy of the times. Henry with his own hand threw Conan out of the window of the ducal palace, so that he was dashed in pieces upon the stones; and Richard gave up the citizens, whose anger he durst not meet, to the mercy of his knights, who carried them off in troops, dreadfully ill used them, and left them to languish and starve in their dungeons if they had not wherewithal to purchase life and liberty. The historian of that time says on this occasion: "Thus we see that proud Normandy, which conceived that she durst do any thing to subjugate, to plunder, and to lay waste England, herself a prey to all sorts of calamities. She has exterminated the rulers of England, and now she tears her own bosom, and makes her own children miserable. She is puffed up with the wealth of England, and now mangles herself for the sake of that wealth; and, like Babylon, she is obliged herself to drink the bitter cup which formerly she forced upon foreign nations."*

In spite of these contests and cruelties, perhaps precisely in consequence of them, the citizens, especially of the principal towns, contrived to extend their influence more and more. They acquired strength and importance, and we soon find their rights publicly recognised more or less by their rulers. Henry granted, or rather confirmed, the

* Odoric. Vital. l. viii.

right which had long virtually belonged to the communes of several towns, Pont-Audemer, Eu, and others; and at Rouen we see, on occasion of the marriage of Henry to the empress Matilda, a proof that the great were learning to respect the people, as the citizens were then for the first time publicly summoned and invited by heralds to take part in the solemnity.

In the struggle for the crown of Normandy, which took place after the decease of Henry I., the youngest of the Conqueror's sons, between Henry Plantagenet (Henry II.) and his barons, we find the nobility divided, and the people not siding with either party. Rouen opened its gates, without the slightest resistance, to Geoffry Plantagenet.

The profound immorality of the Plantagenets—Henry II., for example, forced the bride of his own son to gratify his lust—could not but estrange the people more and more from their princes. These dispositions could not be any secret to the kings of France, and thus we see the designs of that power upon Normandy again manifesting themselves. In the quarrel of Henry II. with the English clergy, Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, who was the champion of the principles of Gregory VII. in England, fled to France, where he found a willing protector in Louis VII., who expressed himself in favour of the English clergy, and encouraged the intervention of the clergy of France. This was the way to gain the good-will of the representatives of the church in Normandy, and such was actually the

result. Thenceforward the kings of France neglected no means to win them over more and more to their interests. But an occasion soon offered to act with more effect. Dissensions in the family of Henry II., fostered if not excited by the king of France, led to the flight of Prince Henry, the eldest son of the English monarch, to France, and Louis took up arms in his behalf. But the oft-tried loyalty of the Normans was strong enough to withstand this attack, and, though the French army advanced without resistance to Rouen, it was there repulsed with great loss.

The crusade of Richard Cœur de Lion contributed to alienate the people still more from the prince. During Richard's absence, the archbishop of Rouen was regent of the duchy; and it may easily be conceived that the clergy did not neglect so fair an opportunity of extending their prerogatives at the expence of the people. In Rouen itself, these encroachments drove the people to riot, as the priests had turned the churches and their precincts into markets, where they allowed foreign traders to expose their goods for sale, upon paying a certain per-centage—a proceeding which tended to injure the trade of the citizens. The people of Rouen pulled down the walls enclosing the churches, and drove out the dealers patronised by the clergy. But, if the citizens proved the stronger of the two on this occasion, the clergy gave way but for the moment, and awaited other opportunities for enforcing their pretensions.

Normandy had successively felt the pressure of the different estates of the duchy, of the princes, of the nobles, and of the clergy; and though at times the kings did not act in the interest of the other two estates, still the citizens had less to hope from them, as they were obliged to divide their activity between two countries, and were in general called away from Normandy when their presence was most wanted there. The ranks of the nobles were already thinned by the crusades: the clergy were drawn by the kings of France into their interest, and could not, at any rate, be losers, by exchanging sovereigns, who in some particulars defied the yoke of Rome, for the pious and most christian kings of France.

Thus every thing was prepared for that event which, ever since the conquest of England by William, had been written in the book of Fate; and Philip Augustus, king of France, was the man destined to fulfil this decree. John, surnamed Lackland, who had but courage enough to be the assassin of a boy, his nephew Arthur, merely accelerated what was before inevitable: for the brave and chivalrous Cœur de Lion himself had not been able to quash the pretensions of Philip Augustus. About three hundred years after the invasion of Neustria by Rollo, and one hundred and fifty after the conquest of England, Normandy again became French, after the reduction of Chateau Gaillard, almost without a struggle. Rouen, Arquets, and Verneuil alone attempted to form a league and to oppose France. But they were too weak to oppose

Fate, and surrendered likewise almost without drawing a sword, when Philip Augustus manifested his willingness to respect and to confirm their rights.

The privileges of the city of Rouen were confirmed three years afterwards, in 1207, at Passy sur Eure, and we see from them what a development commerce and the commune in particular had already attained. In regard to the latter, the people obtained no more than had been granted to them under the dukes of Normandy and the kings of England, as it appears from the articles, in which it is said: "We have given and confirmed to our faithful subjects and citizens of Rouen all their usages and liberties.....We have recognized the right of commune, citizenship, banlieu, and administration of justice, within the limits which king Richard assigned to them, but without prejudice to the rights of the lords who possess landed property in the district of the city."

These rights consisted in the administration of civil justice, and in the cognizance of crimes and misdemeanours up to a certain degree, the exceptions being thus designated, "pourvu qu'il n'y ait point des morts ou mutilations ou que la cause ne depende pas du Plet de l'épée." The Plet de l'épée was the superior criminal jurisdiction. "The mayor shall have the assignations of the people of his jurisdiction, and see them righted, and none shall dare to lay hands upon them, excepting him and his sergeant, unless they have become amenable to the Plet de l'épée; and to this end the mayor is bound

to assist our *bailly*, that he may be able to administer justice in his *baillage*, or jurisdiction." Thus the citizens could not be apprehended but by their own mayor, and it was only through him that the king's *bailly* could execute his decrees.

This act moreover secures to the citizens the right of marrying according to their free choice, relieves them from the duty of paying *fouage*, of guarding the king's prisoners, of paying the *taille ordinaire*, "si non qu'ils l'accordent de bonne volonté," whereby the right of refusing taxes was granted to them. On wine alone they paid a certain duty; on the other hand, the king engaged to pay for the wine which he himself or his people should take, and at the same price at which it was sold to others. According to the same act, the citizens had the right of pasture for their cattle in all the domain forests in Normandy. All goods belonging to the people of Rouen passed free from the king's customs, and they were likewise toll-free upon the Seine. Rouen had moreover a right of staple for all merchandize going up and down the Seine. No ship could go from France to Ireland — excepting one every year from Cherbourg—or come from Ireland to France, without unloading at Rouen; and lastly, strangers could not sell or buy goods in Rouen, but through the medium of a citizen.

The history of Normandy, as an independent state, closes with the conquest of the duchy by Philip Augustus, and with that charter in which he

recognized the privileges of the citizens of Rouen. This act is therefore of great importance, as it clearly proves on what step of freedom and independence the burghers of cities stood at that early period, and marks the moment when Normandy ceased to exist as such. For, thenceforward, though the Norman institutions continued to vegetate for a considerable time, and the English again held temporary sway in Rouen, Normandy was nothing more than a province of France, and it is only as such that its history is of any interest. In my further remarks I shall therefore confine myself to the notice of such points only as serve more or less to illustrate the character of the people.

CHAPTER XXXII.

History of Normandy continued—Invasion of France by Edward III.—Atrocious Treachery of John king of France—Respect paid to popular Opinion by the king of Navarre—Dawning Importance of the Tiers-Etat—King of Rouen—State of France on the Invasion of Henry V.—Spirit of the People of Rouen—Siege and Surrender of the City to the English—Execution of Joan of Arc—Jacques Cœur—Dissensions between the Catholics and the Protestants—Massacre of St. Bartholomew—Conflicts of the League—Effects of the Government of Henry IV.—Assembly of the States General under Louis XIII.—Richelieu—Spirited Conduct of the Parliament of Normandy under Louis XV.—Louis XVI.—The Revolution.

Philip le Bel, son of Philip Augustus, seized the possessions of the count of Artois, who fled to England. D'Harcourt, a Norman knight, accompanied him, and the latter soon contrived to persuade king Edward III. that the best thing he could do would be to invade France, in order to recover Normandy. But the Normans were so entirely reconciled to the authority of France, that (in 1340) they offered their then duke John, son of the king of France, 4000 horse and 20,000 foot-soldiers to oppose the English.

The heroic exploits of the English, and the chi-

valrous spirit of king Edward and his son, the Black Prince, are well known. It is an interesting fact that, at the battle of Crecy (1346), the cannon of the English produced the same effect upon the French as did those of the first conquerors of America on the savages.

During the first half of this contest, Normandy was spared, but a murder was destined to kindle afresh the flames of this war, which had originated in a robbery, and they afterwards extended to Normandy, which had witnessed that murder.

John I., after he ascended the throne, granted the dukedom of Normandy to his son Charles. This prince invited the grandees of the duchy to an entertainment, which he gave on his arrival at Rouen. Among them were Charles king of Navarre, John and William d'Harcourt, and several other nobles, who were reputed to belong to the English party. Just at the moment when the attendants were setting the dishes on the table for the entertainment, king John himself arrived in Rouen, ordered those persons to be seized, sat down coolly to the repast provided for them, and then ordered four of them, among whom was John, the son of Geoffry d'Harcourt, who had induced king Edward to invade France, and commanded a division of his army, to be beheaded. From the window of the dining-room the king watched the executioners performing their office.

This atrocity excited the strongest abhorrence throughout Normandy; and the people everywhere

rose as soon as it became known. Geoffry d'Harcourt hastened back to England, and his paternal feelings inspired him with sufficient eloquence to draw a fearful retaliation on the king, and unfortunately on the people too, of France. A fresh army of English landed, and in the battle of Poitiers (September 19th, 1356), 8000 of them defeated 60,000 French, and took king John himself prisoner.

The hatred subsisting between Charles le Mauvais, king of Navarre, and the king of France, prevented the latter from opposing the English with a requisite force, and affords us occasion to remark a circumstance, which was till then without parallel in modern history, and showed that a total change of things was nearer at hand than any one, and least of all the principal persons of the drama, suspected. Charles, king of Navarre, was the enemy of the king of France. A century earlier, a battle or a single combat would have decided the quarrel, and the royal adversaries would at most have issued a summons to their brave knights, while the people would only have had to bear the expence, and to endure the ill usage of the armies on their passage. But those times were past. Charles le Mauvais, king of Navarre, as I have said, had a stage erected in Paris, from which to harangue the populace, and forced the dauphin Charles, (afterwards Charles V.) to descend from the steps of the throne, and to address the people in the market-place.

Any comment would be superfluous; the fact

speaks plainly enough for itself, and shows that the time was come when even sovereigns felt, or began to have an inkling, that some use might be made of the people, that there was another estate worth thinking of besides the nobles and the clergy. If it is not till long afterwards that we see the *tiers-état* attaining political influence, if it is not till five centuries later that it feels its full strength and makes its enemies feel it too, this is but the same kind of phenomenon that we find on every page of history, which shows the matured but unacknowledged energies of a new age, slumbering as if spell-bound for centuries, till a man arises who knows the formula that breaks the spell, and says to the young giant: "Rouse thee, and go thy way!"

Normandy witnessed the struggle between the two royal parties, till the valiant Duguesclin, to whose army the people of Rouen alone lent 10,000 men, forced the king of Navarre to be quiet. But he could only wrest the sword from his hand, not extract the poison which coursed in the veins of Charles V. of France, and which the king of Navarre had administered to him.

The minority of Charles VI. was a new misfortune for France, for it subjected the country to the authority of plunderers, intent only on enriching themselves, regardless of the welfare of the people, or the emancipation of the kingdom from a foreign yoke. The *intrigues* of the great—*battles* between them had become far less frequent—had meanwhile free scope. We here meet with another phenome-

non, which proves even still more strongly than the speeches of Charles le Mauvais to the people that a new era was preparing. In most of the principal cities, with Paris at their head, the citizens rose against the new imposts of the government, and in Rouen we even find them electing a king from their midst. But this citizen-king no doubt felt that he was unequal to the weight of a crown, and therefore seized the first opportunity to flee from his kingdom. Thus this event was perpetuated only as a sign of the times in the annals of Normandy.

Confusion worse confounded reigned throughout all France, when Charles VI. became a lunatic; and troops of Armagnes and Bourgognes, as the partisans of the duke of Orleans and the duke of Burgundy called themselves, roved through and laid waste the country. At this moment, the English landed in Normandy under Henry V., and defeated the French in the memorable battle of Agincourt (October 24th, 1415). The king of France and his son repaired to Rouen, to take measures there for the defence of the country. But the French troops themselves, which, according to the custom of that time, when the nobles were no longer sufficient, and the sons of the people served as hired soldiers, dispersed after the battle of Agincourt, plundering friend and foe, and drove the citizens of Rouen into insurrection, so that the king was obliged to adopt more energetic measures in regard to these soldiers of his own and of his adherents.

In the history of France there has scarcely been a moment in which the country was in a more deplorable state. Its utter ruin appeared inevitable. A king without either moral or material power; a nobility, showing no signs of life but in intrigues and by hired soldiers; an army which served only while it was paid, and served any one who would pay it; lastly, a people which had not yet arrived at the consciousness of its own strength, and merely stretched its mighty limbs from time to time, in the obscure feeling of that strength—such were the foundations on which the State reposed. Intestine war was the consequence of this situation, and a victorious enemy came, as it appeared, to give the finishing stroke, to erase the name of France from the book of history, and to inscribe that of England in its stead. In France itself there was only heard now and then, in the riots of the citizens, a voice complaining of this state of things; but the princes and the great hoped by means of it to regain what they had lost in the course of time. Only one prince of Europe took to heart the condition of France; this was Sigismund, emperor of Germany; but his voice was lost amid the chaos which reigned in the unhappy country.

Meanwhile, the operations of the English could not fail to be successful. On the 30th of July, 1418, after they had reduced the greater part of Normandy, they appeared before Rouen. On this occasion, the citizens gave a splendid proof of their attachment to their new country, but also of their

energy and independent spirit, in regard to both friend and foe. The siege, though the citizens were left almost entirely to their own exertions, lasted six months. During this interval, they sent a deputation to Paris, and the king heard from the lips of men belonging to the people a language which again announced the new era. "Most excellent monarch," said the envoy, "the inhabitants of Rouen, which belongs to you, have charged me to cry the great *Harro* against you, and against the lords of Bourgogne, who have the government of the king, on account of the oppression which they have to endure from the English; and they tell you through me that if, owing to the want of succour from you, they become subjects of England, you will have no worse enemies in the world than they, and if they can, they will annihilate you and your race."* Only a century earlier, such language would have been impossible and ridiculous, and would at most have drawn down punishment on the bold speaker and his constituents.

The king of France had it not in his power to send any succour whatever to the citizens of Rouen; they were therefore obliged to defend themselves. The Chronicles tell of 30,000 men of Rouen, who are said to have fallen in the defence of the city. Nothing but famine could at length compel them to think of surrender. When reduced to the last extremity, they resolved to set fire to the four corners

* Gaube, Hist. du Duché de Norm. ii. 166.

of the city, and to fight their way through the English, or to die honourably. But they were spared this alternative; for the English offered them so favourable a capitulation, that the majority of the citizens accounted it no disgrace to accept the terms. In this capitulation the English recognised the privileges of the city, and only demanded a contribution of 345,000 gold crowns, and the delivery of three defenders of the city, Robert Livet, vicar-general; Jean Jourdan, captain of the artillery; and Alloie Blanchard, captain of the citizens; and with this condition the people of Rouen complied, in the hope that they should be able to ransom them. The two former did actually ransom themselves; but Blanchard replied, "I have no property, and if I had I would not employ it to prevent an Englishman from dishonouring himself." And the English did dishonour themselves, for their brave adversary was executed.

Rouen continued for thirty years under the dominion of England. Its citizens witnessed the cruel execution of Joan of Arc, and witnessed it with the utmost indignation. Not long afterwards, all Normandy was in revolt; and when the troops of the French approached the city, the inhabitants of Rouen rose too, and fought hand to hand in the streets against the murderers of the Maid of Orleans, delivered the keys of the place to the French, and assisted to besiege Talbot in the castle of Rouen, till he was forced to surrender.

We have had frequent occasion to remark the

progress of the spirit of independence among the citizens. The whole military system had gradually changed. Henceforward the battles of the country were fought by the sons of the people. But in France a single name, that of a Jacques Cœur, serves to designate the new conformation of things. I have no need to insist on the importance of this name. The history of Jacques Cœur is universally known.

When Charles VII. resorted to a radical preventive against the attempts at poisoning which he apprehended, that is to say, starved himself to death, Louis XI. had but to put a finishing hand to the work. With the aid of the people, he annihilated the last relic of the political influence of the noblesse, and thus cleared for his successor, Louis XII., a way along which he could proceed in order to gain the appellation of *Père du Peuple.* A friend of his, cardinal d'Ambois, archbishop of Rouen, was his vicegerent in Normandy, where he proved a benefactor of the people.

The religious dissensions between the Protestants and the Catholics, to which we are approaching, gave a different direction to the course of events. The noblesse conceived that it had found in them the means of recovering its ancient rights; the people the means of extending their's: but both were disappointed by the denouement of the sanguinary drama, for in France it merely led to the victory of the royal power over both. Normandy was the principal theatre of these conflicts, as the

majority of the people very soon embraced the new doctrine. Coligny, throwing himself at the feet of Francis II., strove to obtain liberty of conscience for the Normans; but it required other means to gain this point: accordingly, under Charles IX., the professors of the new faith rose in Normandy, and had soon the ascendency in most of the towns. The parliament was obliged to retire to Louviers, that it might not be forced to obey the Protestants in Rouen. The city was then besieged, at first in vain, by the duke d'Aumale, and at length reduced by king Charles IX. The scaffold was the argument employed against the new doctrine, both in the capital of Normandy and in the whole country.

It is not consistent with my plan to detail the struggles of the two parties in Normandy; suffice it merely to remark that, in many places in Normandy, at least, the Catholics themselves held back the sword of vengeance, after a Catherine de Medicis had waved the torch of the Furies in the night of St. Bartholomew; that a cardinal Bourbon, archbishop of Rouen, a bishop Hennuyer at Lisieux, a governor Sigagne at Dieppe, paid higher respect to their God than to the command of a bloodthirsty debauchee, whose watchword was "Messe, mort, ou bastille," and of a vindictive queen, who, when the constable de Montmorency was taken prisoner, exclaimed, "Eh bien, il faudra donc prier Dieu en français!" and who was therefore not even impelled by religious zeal to this atrocity. In spite of the efforts of many Catholic ecclesiastics and

civil officers, there fell in the eight *baillages* of Normandy (Rouen, Caen, Alençon, Evreux, Bayeux, Scez, Coutances, Avranches), in the days of terror succeeding the night of St. Bartholomew, according to authentic documents, not fewer than 141,560 victims, by the dagger, or by the sword of justice, which the government had put into the hands of murderers.

But even these atrocious means were not capable of extirpating an idea. A few years sufficed to restore such power to the Protestants, that they were able to force Henry III. to recognise them, to give up to them eight fortified towns in the province, and to grant them seat and vote in each parliament. But after the death of Henry III., they were strong enough to clear the way to the throne for a Protestant prince, in spite of the League, in spite of all the priests and grandees of France, and in spite of the pope and the king of Spain.

The conflicts of the League again furnish occasions enough for remarking the new conformation of things. The League itself recognised the recently-acquired power of the people, for it united with the citizens, declared itself the champion of their rights, insisted on the abolition of the abuses of power, and demanded justice for all. In Paris we even see, after the death of Henry III., the leaders of the citizens consulting whether they should proclaim a republic, and invite all the other great towns of France to form a league of free cities, after the example of the Swiss confederation.

The proclamations of the League, drawn up in the spirit of the citizens, gained it adherents every where. Nearly the whole of Normandy, though containing so many Protestants, declared in its favour. This circumstance accounts for the obstinate resistance which Henry IV. met with in Normandy, and at Rouen in particular.

Henry's desertion of the Protestant for the Catholic faith, but still more his conduct towards the citizens of the towns which he took, led him at length to the throne. He was the last king of France who comprehended that the times had changed, and that the people had acquired an independent power. In 1596 he thus addressed the states assembled at Rouen: "I have not called you together, by any means, as my predecessors did, to make known to you my will. I have assembled you to hear your counsels, to believe in them, and to follow them, in short, to place myself under your guardianship—a wish seldom formed by kings, gray-beards, and conquerors."

Perhaps he knew not himself that, in thus speaking in accordance with the spirit of the time, he had yielded to necessity, that he had spoken as his good genius prompted; for, when his Gabrielle expressed her surprise at this guardianship, he replied, "Ventre-saint-gris, je l'entends avec mon épée à côté." The words addressed to the parliament have become the property of history and of the French people; those uttered in the boudoir of his mistress died away upon its walls.

All France, and Normandy in particular, felt the beneficial effects of the government of a king who, at least, did not act contrary to the spirit of his time. His death was the culminating point in the history of the French people, and thenceforward we proceed with giant strides to the French revolution. None of the successors of Henry IV., who, down to Louis XVI., were all boys when they ascended the throne, had any notion how, through what causes, and by whom, the nobles were driven from the political theatre; none of them ever appeared to suspect that the gradual attainment of majority by the people had alone given kings the power to reduce the nobles and the clergy to political ciphers. The nobles had even demeaned themselves so far as to perform the services of courtiers, ready to comply with every wish of the king or of his courtiers. The kings could not find more devoted lacqueys, and therefore relinquished the people and the government to the great, who regarded intrigue as the only way of regaining their former political power.

The *tiers-état* alone had clear views in these gloomy times, and even strove to act the part of protector of the royal power. In the states-general, which Louis XIII. summoned together (October 27th, 1614), it requested the king, in order to check a reprobate doctrine which had been spreading for some time past, and threatening the independence of the sovereign in regard to his temporalities, to permit a fundamental law to be enacted in the assembly of the states-general to this effect—that,

since the king was recognised as sovereign of France, and derived his power from God alone, there was not on earth either an ecclesiastical or a temporal power which had a right to deprive him of his kingdom, or to release or dispense his subjects from the fealty and attachment which they owed him on any ground whatever. But the voice of the representatives of the people had no more effect than a voice in the wilderness; the king understood it not, and those who did understand it, the nobles and the clergy, opposed the adoption of the proposed article, and took care that, during the reign of Louis XIV., the notables only, and not the states-general, should be called together.

The nobility and the clergy, no longer the energetic representatives of a want of the time and of circumstances, but the mere panders to the passions and whims of a boy, a woman, a favourite, soon ruled alone, and obtained without much difficulty the repeal of the edicts which declared the citizens to be relieved from the *taille*, and even found means to deprive the ennobled citizens of their patents.

The intrigues of a duke de Longueville very soon produced disturbances and insurrections in Normandy, without, however, giving a different turn to the course of events.

Lastly, Richelieu was the very incarnation of that spirit of the rulers of France, of the nobility, and of the clergy. With what eyes the people of Normandy regarded this rule is proved by an insurrection in Rouen, when the people forcibly opposed

the execution of the *Edits bursaux* which he issued, and yielded only to adroit intrigue and to the armed force. The minority of Louis XIV., the carnival farce of the League, which was then called La Fronde, only increased the general confusion; till at length war diverted the attention of the people from domestic affairs, and constituted a point of repose, by giving for a time to the popular energy another field, a different sort of activity, in *la gloire.*

Some have attempted to account for the Revolution by the philosophic ideas preached in and after the time of Louis XIV., and by the influence of writers upon France. But this phenomenon was itself only an effect of the awakened spirit of the people, and most certainly not its cause. Nothing but a misconception, or rather an absolute ignorance, of preceding events can lead to such a deduction. The intellectual and physical force, if the latter term may be applied to the energy developed in war, which France displayed under Louis XIV., is to be accounted for only by the awaking of the people from the slumber of a thousand years, which gave it strength, even before it knew what it would be at, to strangle the serpents in its cradle, and when it had arrived at consciousness to shake the world on its axis.

During the reign of a Louis XV., the parasite plant, which had struck root in the dunghill of the middle ages, produced flowers and fruit; and under Louis XVI. it was cut down along with the withered tree up which it had climbed, and which it had entirely drained of its sap. The struggle of the par-

liament under Louis XV. with the courtiers and favourites was only a type of the conflict of the constituent and legislative assemblies in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The *gens de la robe* were the last advocates of the *tiers-état* and the people, and the creatures of the chancellor Maupéou strove to silence them also.

Normandy distinguished itself in this contest. In an *arrêt* of the 15th of April, 1771, the parliament of Rouen declared the favoured servants of the court to be "intrus parjures et violateurs de leurs serments;" and the manifesto of the 18th of November, 1772, addressed to the Normans, after the parliament of Normandy was dissolved, even went so far as to threaten the separation of Normandy from France, if the ancient rights of the country should continue to be trampled under foot as they then were. It appealed to the compact of 1204, by which Normandy was united with France, and by which it was mutually agreed that, if either party neglected to fulfil it, the other was released from the engagement, contending that the province was thereby replaced in its former state, and consequently given back to England, or at liberty to seek another sovereign for itself.

The document in question then proceeds thus: "Besides this contract of incorporation, the Normans have to demand the famous codex, *la charte aux Normands*. This consists of three principal articles. According to the first, the *Coûtumes* of the country and its usages must not be altered upon any pretext or at

any time whatever; by the second, the duchy shall be left in possession of its ancient court of justice or sovereign Echiquier, which decides in last instance on all suits in the province, so that none of them can be transferred to a judge in any other country; and by the third, the kings and the dukes of Normandy must not upon any pretext impose taxes of any kind upon the province, unless the three estates of the country admit that there is the most urgent necessity for them."

Such was the compact, under the protection of which Normandy took the kings of France for its dukes. Its submission therefore depends on the fulfilment of the contract, the price of which is fixed by the instrument itself. "All people," it says, "are appointed by Nature avengers of the violated law of nations and protectors of the oppressed." Twenty years later, this principle was solemnly proclaimed throughout all France.

The manifesto *aux Normands* shows how the notions of the people had developed themselves, how they had gradually become aware of what had been for ages germinating in the soil. The authors of this manifesto were members of the parliament of Rouen, nay, even nobles; but, in order to defend their own rights, they were obliged, like Mirabeau and Lafayette at a later period, to become tribunes of the people, to speak their language, to advocate their cause, to fight their enemies. All the nobles of Normandy, far away from the court, acceded to these principles in a *Lettre au Roi* (November 17th,

1772), but its language was different, for it was assumed in this *lettre* that the king was held in subjection by his favourites, and it therefore prayed that he would emancipate himself.

Louis XVI. strove to repair the mischief done by his predecessors. It is well known how he was again checked in these efforts by the court and the favourites, how they pulled down as fast as he built up, how they got into his way whenever he would have advanced a step, and how at last, misled by them, he leagued himself with the foreign foe for the purpose of annihilating all that the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies had done, and that he had sworn to uphold, and how all this brought him to the scaffold.

For four or five centuries, what was destined to happen had been in preparation. The nearer we approach to the epoch of the Revolution, the more plainly we perceive the signs and tokens of coming events. In all the great epochs of history we see the future preparing in this manner for centuries, till at length the man arises who knows how to solve the riddle, sums up, and decides the whole controversy. For the revolution of 1789 Sieyes was that man, for he said, "What is the *tiers-état*, the bourgeoisie? Nothing.—What ought it to be? Every thing." And the Genius of History said Amen! and it was so.

The Revolution closed the last epoch of the history of France to commence a new one. It erased the names of the provinces, and that of Normandy among the rest.

We stand upon the field which it has furrowed in all directions; we see the crops that are every where springing up on it; and the astonished world strives to ascertain whether the new plant, the young tree, is the fruit-tree of the new epoch, giving sustenance to all or only to a few, or whether it is a poisonous vegetable. Futurity will appreciate the value of the fruit, and the god of History will bless it, distribute it, and give to each his due.

THE END.

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